

*History of*

**THE  
FIRST METHODIST  
CHURCH**

**1856 -- 1956**



**Published in our  
Centennial year**

270.9  
Ay



FIRST  
METHODIST  
CHURCH  
LORAIN, OHIO

*CENTENNIAL  
HISTORICAL PAGEANT*

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1956

8:00 P. M. IN SANCTUARY

**1856 -- 1956**



REV. RALPH GRAY, Minister

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# *Program*

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1893

## Dedication of Church At Reid and Bank Street

Miss Emily Heinrick — Director

### SCENE I

SATURDAY NIGHT, DEC. 7, 1893

Bishop .....	Mr. Lewis Goodell
District Superintendent .....	Mr. Frank Ayres
Pastor .....	Mr. Alfred Benson

#### Board Members

Mr. Edward Peters	Mr. Norman Anderson
Mr. John Stone	Mr. Warren Robinson
Mr. John Wells	Mr. Gordon Smith
Mr. Gordon Garber	Bob Wickens

### SCENE II

SUNDAY MORNING, DEC. 8, 1893

#### Above Board Members and

Mrs. Michael Fogo	Mr. Edward Peters
Mrs. Arthur Chapman	Mrs. John Stone
Miss Thelma Pits	Mrs. John Wells
Mrs. Alfred Benson	

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## *Program*

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1896

### **The Ladies Reminesce**

Mrs. Chas. Crehore — Narrator and Director

Mrs. Robert Howley

Mrs. Russell Reynolds

Mrs. Wilbur Tipton

Mrs. Louis Keller

Mrs. Robert Stilgenbauer

Miss Lynn Radabaugh

Mrs. Jay Coleman

\* \* \* \*

1910

### **Typical Choir Rehearsal**

Mrs. Winton Koepke — Director

Members of Choir

\* \* \* \*

1926

### **Marching to Zion**

People of the Church

\* \* \* \*

**Today**

### **Scroll for Tomorrows**

Miss Kamille Reiss — Director

Boys and Girls of the Junior Department

**Finale**

**Benediction**

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To the early villagers of  
Black River and Charleston who  
builded on a sure Methodist  
foundation

and

To the city dwellers of  
Morain who, at the end of this  
one hundred years, are keeping  
the faith -

we respectfully  
dedicate this History.

Co-authors and compilers,  
Edna Whitehouse Ayres  
Catherine Gregg

270.9

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# The Early Pioneer Church

■ IF A CHURCH be as John Wesley defined it, "a congregation of faithful men, . . . ." our church in its centennial year is in reality a hundred and seventeen years old. Many people have known, of course, that our present church grew out of an earlier Presbyterian church which became Methodist in 1856, but that early pioneer church was a part of that period of local history about which information is very hard to find and document, and it has been realized only very recently how continuous the Presbyterian-Methodist organizations were.

The first church of any sort in Black River was organized in May 1839, the minister was a Mr. Cochran, and the services were held in the school-house. Almost nothing has been learned of Cochran but he must have been a fairly young and vigorous man for he assisted personally in the moving of the frame structure that became our first church building in 1842. He was succeeded in the ministry in the Black River church by Father Betts, Dr. Alfred Betts was a physician who practiced in the western part of Western Reserve in the early days and found himself doctoring souls as well as bodies and and leading so many religious services that he returned east to study theology and was ordained in the Presbyterian church. In his last years he made his home in Brownhelm and served churches in both Huron and Black River. When he came to the church in Black River he usually stayed at the home of W. S. Lyons, the shipbuilder. Lyons, one of the sons of the Ralph Lyons who came to Black River with his wife and two children in 1810, had the first brick home on the lake front west of the river which stood where the American Legion now stands on West Erie Ave. Mrs. T. R. Bowen was born in it in 1850, and one of her earliest memories was hearing her older brother, Frank Lyons, complain bitterly about having to pitch hay to a "darned old Presbyterian horse!" Whether or not Frank took more kindly to pitching hay when the horse changed to Methodist or not is lost from the record, but he did later join the Methodist church.

The only members of the early congregation whom we know much about were the descendants of the earliest settlers who came to Black River and Sheffield around 1810-1820. William H. Root, grandfather of Harriet Root and Mrs. Hibbard, was a charter member of the church as a young man and served it as clerk. The church record in his handwriting was extant in 1887 but has since disappeared. The only other known charter members were Daniel T. Baldwin and his wife Sophia Reid Baldwin. Baldwin, who came to Ohio from Massachusetts, was a community leader: he had served a term in the State Legislature in 1834 and was an Associate Judge in Lorain County. His wife was the eldest daughter of the John S. Reid who first came to Black River in the spring of 1810.

In 1842 a house belonging to Daniel Baldwin and his wife was moved over to Lot 108 on the original village plat and made over into a church building. The house was said to have been originally the house and shoe-shop of Jacob Vedder, but more interesting

than who owned or used that building would be the name of the person who actually built it, for that first move was the beginning of a long odyssey that only an exceedingly well-built structure could have survived. The first move was accomplished by the help of Ed Porter's ox team and the brain and muscle of Cochran, Baldwin, William H. Root, and A. R. Fitzgerald. The lot on which it was placed was on the west side of North Washington between West Erie and Second St.; it was a part of the inheritance of Sophia Reid Baldwin from her father who purchased it originally from the Connecticut Land Co. After the building was set down on the lot the congregation took out some of the partitions, added a small belfry, and made it over into a church.

Other known members of that early church, some of them possibly charter members, were Mrs. W. S. Lyons, Mrs. William C. Jones, and Elizabeth Breck who later married James Chapman. Mrs. Lyons was a daughter of Sophia Baldwin's sister Elizabeth. Elizabeth Reid was the daughter who came with her father to Black River in 1810 as a young girl, and Mrs. Lyons was the grandmother of Mrs. Katherine Wire, Mrs. Rusha Fauver, James L. Bowen, Mrs. A. S. Gregg, and Mrs. Mary Lyons Brandt.

Mrs. William C. Jones, born Catherine Lyons, was a twin sister of W. S. Lyons. Her interest in the little church lay chiefly in the Sunday School which she organized and kept going. Her husband, "Captain Billy" Jones, was the oldest son of the Augustus Jones of the team of Jones and Murdock, the two "shipwrights from Connecticut" who came to Black River in 1818 and established the first shipyard. He was one of the earliest of a long line of people, mostly men, who have attended and supported the church generously all their lives but who for reasons of their own never joined it. Although Jones was never a member of any church he served as a trustee of ours in 1870. No descendants of that family are left in Lorain; the line died out here with the Vader and Macomber families.

Elizabeth Breck was born in Germany, came to America at the age of eleven, and lived with her family on the Ebenezer Gregg farm just over the river. At sixteen or seventeen she came to live with the Baldwins, joined the church at that time, and later married James Chapman who ran a furniture store on North Broadway. She was the grandmother of George Wickens, Jr., and Treva Chapman, and has descendants living in Ohio but none in Lorain.

Probable members includes Ebenezer Gregg and Elizabeth Reid Gillmore. Gregg was a farmer of Presbyterian stock who bought a farm on the east side of the river in 1842. He moved to Elyria in 1857 but later returned to Lorain. Elizabeth Reid Gillmore had an interesting life that should have been more completely documented while the information was still available. She was married the first time to William Smith at the age of sixteen in Black River, probably sometime in 1814. Smith was a charter member of the Sheffield Congregational Church, but no mention is made there of Elizabeth. He left her a widow after four years of marriage,

and she then married Captain Harry Brooks. This was a very short marriage lasting only a few months when Brooks was drowned when his ship went down in a storm in Lake Erie off Huron. Also lost on the same ill-fated voyage was Elizabeth's older brother, Cornelius Reid, who was mate in charge of cargo on Brooks' ship. At twenty-six Elizabeth married Quartus Gillmore who had come to Black River from Massachusetts on foot in 1812. The couple lived together over forty years and raised Elizabeth's eleven children, only eight of which were also Gillmore's. Gillmore led the church in 1857, but again independently of his wife. Elizabeth became a member of our church at sometime in her life, but exactly when is still unknown.

Apparently the pioneer church was never quite sure itself whether it was really Presbyterian or Congregationalist. It was officially Presbyterian in 1856 because it took the official label and organization of the minister, but it may have been Congregationalist earlier. The people who attended it were of various religious backgrounds, and many more attended than joined for until after 1850 it was the only church in Black River. Later attempts to fasten much sectarianism on it apparently have arisen from a lack of understanding of the realities of pioneer life.

Beginning about 1850 many more people came to the mouth of Black River. There were enough German farmers to found the Emanuel Evangelical Church in 1851, but the English-speaking newcomers did not help the Presbyterian church very much for many of them sailed the lakes and were away in the summer, while others who were willing to attend the church did not actually join. This may have been for denominational reasons, and it may have been because, as Mrs. Chapman later expressed it, "They was old-fashioned Presbyterians" and were rather severe. In any case, when Charles Felch, a young farmer newcomer in Sheffield, attended it in 1856 at the invitation of Mrs. Catharine Jones, he found the little pioneer church in desperate straits organizationally speaking. As he told it later, "The deacons had all run out and Mrs. Jones kept the Sunday School going!" Why the little church ran out of deacons is not difficult to ascertain. Daniel Baldwin died in 1847, and of the four Baldwin boys only Charles lived to be old enough to marry. William Root transferred to the Sheffield Congregational church as soon as his business affairs took him back to Sheffield, and the husbands of many of the church women were of the William Jones variety and not qualified as deacons.

In the summer of 1856 a Methodist minister from Elyria, Brother Moses K. Hard, assisted by Brother Griffin, began holding a series of revival services in the schoolhouse in Black River. The remaining Presbyterians attended them and after some consultation among themselves invited Hard to continue his meetings in the Presbyterian church. At the same time Father Betts retired from the ministry and requested Hard to "take over" his work in Black River. The Presbyterian membership all acquiesced, and in September 1856 Hard met with a group in the Presbyterian church building and organized a Methodist class, whereupon the Presbyterian society

officially disbanded and the church became Methodist.

There were eight or nine people present when that class was organized, all either Presbyterians or attendants of the Presbyterian church, and these persons constitute the charter members of our present church. Unfortunately all the early records of the church were lost when the home of the church secretary, Mr. Johnson, burned sometime in the early 1860's. Assembling their names a century later is a most difficult task, and at this late date only three are known with certainty. These three are Charles Felch, Mrs. Catharine Jones, and Mrs. Elizabeth Breck Chapman. Felch was the only man present besides the minister, so he was appointed class leader. The biggest reason for the shortage of men is probably that the navigation season had not yet closed. Of the remaining five or six women, it has proved easier to find out which were not than which were! Sophia Baldwin was not; following the death of her husband she had moved to Oberlin and married again. Mrs. W. S. Lyons was for some reason unable to attend the organization meeting, although she later joined the first class. Ebenezer Gregg was also not present but joined the class later. One of those present may have been a Mrs. Mallery; Rev. Hard mentions a woman of that name in 1887 but he was a very old man then, his memory was failing, he had organized a great many Methodist classes hereabouts, and she may have belonged to another one. Elizabeth Reid Gillmore may have been one, although she was no longer living in 1887 and no one happened to mention her. And the trail, so far as we have been able to follow it, ends there. It is to Charles Felch, who later moved to Oberlin and whose memory was still clear in 1887, that we are indebted for most of our information about that first organizational meeting.

The change from Presbyterian to Methodist apparently occasioned very little surprise or fuss in the community. Alex McPhail was a young man sailing the lakes that summer of 1856 who had attended but not joined the Presbyterian church. As he expressed it later, "When I left in the spring the church was Presbyterian and when I came back in the fall they was Methodist." So Alex joined the Methodists along with the rest. Sophia Baldwin dragged her arthritic joints back from Oberlin on a visit to her sisters, attended a few of Hard's meetings, and was in no way disturbed at the change. If the Methodists occupied the land and the little frame church she said she didn't care so long as it was put to religious use.

Unfortunately Sophia Baldwin neglected to leave the church a clear title to the property before her death and that oversight led to an ugly lawsuit in 1887. As a result the church had to pay the daughter of one of its early class leaders and stewards almost as much for that as her dead father and his partner, also dead, had paid Sophia for her entire holdings in Black River—roughly most of the land between Washington and Hamilton Avenues from the lake about to the Nickel Plate railroad. To complete the irony, the bulk of the money paid in settlement in 1887 was contributed by Thomas Gawn who was never a member of the church but served it as

trustee. Someone asked him why he did it when he was not a member to which he replied, "Oh just call me a brother-in-law of the church." The church has had many brothers-in-law, but few as devoted as Gawn. Unpleasant as the whole proceeding was, the testimony in that suit seemed designed to reveal much of the missing early history of the church, and if the lawyers had only asked the right questions and fewer objections had been sustained by the Court, we might have found a great deal more in that record!

Hard's revival services continued until the spring of 1857 and by their conclusion over ninety persons had been "converted" and joined the little church. Among these were McPhail, Quartus Gillmore, Captain Armstead Lumm and his wife, Roland Osgood and his wife who had just arrived in Black River, Captain Henry Wallace, Caleb and Mrs. Peachey, Ebenezer Gregg, and Mr. and Mrs. H. D. Root. Many of these people have descendants living in or near Lorain. The Roots were the grandparents of Lewis Goodell and Mrs. Heeley, and the Osgoods were the grandparents of Mrs. Clyde Grubbs. Marjorie Born, in the Cleveland Public Library, is a granddaughter of the Peacheys.

As new members were added new classes for them had to be organized, so a number of organization

meetings, often held in the homes, had become confused with the original one by 1887. By the spring of 1857 the church was fully organized into five classes with the class leaders and stewards constituting the first Official Board of the church. These five class leaders were Captain Lumm, Roland Osgood, Quartus Gillmore, Elijah Hayden, and Ebenezer Gregg. When Hard left in 1857 the church was attached to the Amherst circuit.

What kind of people were all these early pioneers? We knew that they were hearty folk, and loved to sing, talkative and sometimes contentious, sociable, jolly and laughter-loving, sturdy, and altogether quite human. Much of their life revolved around the lake. Many of them were baptized in it, the women carried soft water from it up the lake bank to do their washing, the men built wooden sailing ships for it and many of them sailed the vessels. When bad storms arose the womenfolk met in the homes to pray for their safety. Many of the men died young from disease and drowning, and most of their widows married again not to mention a few second marriages of widowers, thus introducing a bewildering confusion of names and identities which helps to make the history of that early period both exasperating and fascinating.

—Catherine Gregg, 1956

## The Religious Life of the Early Church

■ HISTORIANS OF THE 20th century have tended to emphasize the role of the dramatic revivals and the great itinerant evangelists in the religious and cultural life of the 19th century frontier. While the revival idea did influence the early church in Lorain greatly, it is easy to form a false conception of the actual role of revivals in the religious life of the church. Brother Hard's services a hundred years ago "converted" a total of 108 persons, indeed a large number for the little settlement at Black River, but most of them were already Christians by belief and background, and they were not the type of person to be attracted by exaggerated dramatic displays. Any undignified excess would have repelled rather than attracted men like Quartus Gillmore, Sr. and Captain Lumm, born and bred in the New England tradition, or "old-fashioned" Presbyterians like Father Betts and the daughters of John S. Reid. Rev. Hard's services were simple, warm meetings with eloquent preaching, prayer, song, and quiet testimony conducted with dignity. They were meant to be only the beginning for the real religious work of the church which was carried on continuously through the classes.

It is strange to think that these "classes", once the distinction hall-mark of the denomination, have almost completely disappeared from modern Methodism. They are found today instead in Alcoholics Anonymous an association organized on the original Wesleyan class principle, and the great source of strength of that association is the same as the source of strength of the early Methodist church.

The classes first began in England when John Wesley discovered a distressing tendency on the part of his converts, drawn from the gin-soaked

laboring classes of the early English industrial revolution, to "backslide". He used them as a means of helping his people to help one another to follow the narrow road leading to Salvation and to the gentility his Oxford training helped him to couple with it. The Methodists on the American frontier were not the same sort of personalities as Wesley's first British converts. The frontiersmen were individuals of strong character and the sins which they "from time to time most grievously committed" were of the sort that spring from strength—aggression, unscrupulous ambition, avarice, vindictiveness, and harsh judgment—rather than the sort originating from weakness requiring a buttress. Such strong personalities were in need of the "curiously warm feeling" of a Methodist conversion, and that newly-kindled flame needed careful tending lest it flicker out before the concept of loving kindness could be translated into a way of life and the convert relapse into a cold selfishness. This the "class" did, following the conversion, as the people met in small, informal, intimate groups in each other's homes to discuss their spiritual life and problems with each other.

On the American frontier the classes served as a good organizational device to keep circuit churches with itinerant pastors active, and they also provided a convenient tool for church expansion. According to the Methodist Discipline, the class of that time consisted of not less than three and not more than twenty persons under the general guidance of an ordained itinerant preacher who appointed a class leader from among the members and to whom the class leader reported regularly on the meetings and spiritual state of the class. A class thus organized was



sufficient to constitute an official Methodist Episcopal church organization. Our church began with just such a class in 1856 composed of the remaining local Presbyterians and others who had attended but not joined the earlier Presbyterian church. In the 19th century form of church organization, the class leaders and stewards constituted the Official Board of the church. Church trustees were a later phenomenon.

The 20th St. church in Lorain was thus organized in 1893 when a class established by George Wickens, Sr. and T. R. Bowen met in the old Simpson Chapel on Sunday afternoons with Wickens as class leader. The 20th St. people in turn organized the Vincent Methodist church as a class.

This about marked the end of Methodist class organization in the Middle West. Delaware Ave. church, founded in 1899, was organized when a member of our church, Mrs. F. D. Ward, the wife of the school superintendent, assisted by Mrs. N. B. Hurst, established not a "class" but a Sunday School on the East Side while "the bridge was out." At that time while the new bridge was being built the river crossing was made on a pontoon bridge at water level. This plus the two railroad tracks and the steps up the river bank made it difficult for people to cross and rather dangerous for children. The East Side Sunday School and later the church was composed mostly of Manxmen, the Gawns and the Faraghers. Thomas Gawn gave the lot at the corner of Delaware Ave., and for a long time the Delaware Ave. Methodist church was known to many local people as "The Manx Church."

Grace Methodist Church in South Lorain also began as a Sunday School in 1900, but our church played no part in establishing that one. We only reaped the benefits.

The adult Sunday School classes have taken over so much of the work of the old "classess" and the church organization has changed so greatly that the sporadic attempts to revive them have proved unsuccessful and they seem to have become a historic anachronism. Yet they played a very vital role in early Methodism and should not be forgotten.

#### **Camp Meeting at Lakeside**

Following the Civil War the Methodists from northwestern Ohio began gathering on the beautifully wooded Marblehead peninsula at what is now Lakeside for outdoor camp meetings. These were in a sense revival meetings held in a big tent with straw on the ground where the people knelt to pray, and the people attending them camped out making it a sort of vacation. Groups from our church in Lorain used to charter a sailing vessel each summer and go up to Lakeside for these meetings.

In 1879 a group of ten families from our church decided to build a permanent camp building there. The group included John R. Nichols, T. R. Bowen, Mrs. Swartwood, T. H. Jones, T. R. King, and Perry Cousins among others. The summer they built it the men remained behind after the meeting to do the work while the women went home. Later when the women saw Captain Cowley's scow "Mona" lying in the harbor waiting for a load they suggested that all the families go up there for a picnic and bring the men home with them. It would have been uneventful except that a big storm arose on the way.

Landing at Lakeside was clearly impossible so the "Mona" anchored on the lee side of Cedar Point to ride it out and everybody was desperately seasick. Lizzie McPhail was one of the sickest.

The Lakeside building was a big barracks with five rooms ranged along each side, each with a room upstairs above it to be reached by means of a ladder and a trap door. The families then drew lots to see which set of rooms—one down, one up—each one should have. Cooking was done outdoors over an open fire at first and later over an old wood range. The partitions on the second story of the barracks ran only part way to the roof, and the rest was left open for purposes of ventilation. The young people, who slept upstairs on straw ticks because of their greater agility with the ladder, often a half-dozen to a room, quickly found another use than ventilation for the open upstairs. Many a pillow, not to mention other items, was tossed over those upstairs partitions and the young folks frequently got pretty noisy. Taps at ten was a grounds rule, and when things got too gay T. R. Bowen used to wrap sharply on the walls and call the barracks to order.

Part of that old barracks still exists. It was cut in two and remodeled in 1929 and the front half is now the Bowen-Gregg cottage at 350 Maple Ave., while the back part is the cottage directly behind it on 4th St.

These two cottages are the second-oldest buildings on the Lakeside grounds.

#### **Prayermeeting**

Prayermeeting was the last of the old religious customs to survive. In a measure it helped to take the place of the old class meetings and it was held traditionally on Thursday nights. It was simply what its name indicates: the people gathered together to pray and sing hymns, and the last of these meetings took place in the present church building not being abandoned until sometime after the First World War. They prayed over many things, always storms on the lake, and over three wars, and the state of the world and the nation and their own souls.

Funny and serious things happened there over the years. Devotion to prayermeeting brought on John Nichols' last illness. He never missed one, and on that night he walked from his farm where the Country Club stood all the way to the church in a pouring rain, sat in his wet clothes, then walked home again in the rain, contracted pneumonia, and died. In a lighter vein, old Mrs. Carney of the hot temper wandered away one day into a Disciple meeting where immersion was presented as the only real way of attaining Salvation. The more the man talked the angrier Mrs. Carney became, and when she stalked back into her own prayermeeting the next night it still hadn't worn off. She was called on to pray, and still indignant hissed into Mrs. Bowen's ear, "You pray, Kate! I can't!"

#### **Good Times in the old Church**

As Elizabeth Wickens Fisher wrote recently "Way back the little old church was a great place to make and keep friends." The folks always had a good time together; they knew how to laugh as well as sing and pray, and did all three heartily. In the summer there were hayrides and in the winter sleigh-rides, not just for the young folks, but for everyone.

The sleighrides used to converge often on the old Crehore farm where the folks made taffy and had a candy pull. They would perhaps be forgotten now were it not for the misadventure of one sledge full of folks which upset one snowy night back in the late '70's or early '80's. The photographer Didero, who had married one of the Haynes girls, happened to be on that sledge, so when it proved impossible for them to go further they all went to Didero's studio and had their picture taken while the other sledge proceeded to its destination. The oldest person

in the picture is Grandma Chapman, the charter member of our church, who was then in her seventies. The youngest, the tall young fellow standing on the right, Burt Nichols, was still in his teens, so the ages of the people on that sledge covered seventeen to seventy and they all look in high spirits, Sympathy between the young and the old was much greater in those early days than now, and perhaps our world today would be a happier place if some of it could be recovered.

—Catherine Gregg, 1956

## Pastors and Pastorates

■ A separate account is written about the Circuit Riders.

**Rev. A. P. Jones: Sept. 1875 - Sept. 1877**

His history will be found in the "Green Book," compiled by Rev. J. Frank Smith. Rev Jones was paid \$625 per annum.

**Rev. Uriah Richards: Sept. 1877 - 1879**

His name is found in Methodist Church history of other nearby towns, Elyria, Berea, etc. He was living in Berea at the time he served Lorain as pastor. Quite a drive, or horseback ride, it seems.

**Rev. B. A. Disney: Sept. 1879 - Sept. 1881**

From the scrapbook of Lillie Fox Lyons we found two articles written by Rev. B. A. Disney concerning two events of his ministry.

One dealt with the profession of religion of Mrs. Eveline Dennison, her illness and her request to be baptised as a seal of her profession. Rev. Disney performed the sacred rite in the presence of members of her family and some friends. He also preached her funeral service on the text, Matthew 24, 44, "Therefore, be ye also ready."

Mrs. Dennison, daughter of Mrs. Lucy Bradley, died Dec. 19, 1879.

The second article said, in part, "The children of the M. E. Sunday School assembled on Wednesday evening and were treated to popcorn and candy. Even the old people who came seemed to catch the contagion of good cheer, and could be seen "laughing all over" at the witticisms of Messrs. Harry Jones and Gorie Baldwin as they distributed the treat." On the program were some numbers which would probably create a smile were we to hear them today. (1.) A German speech, Rusha Reid; (2.) Recitation, "Foreclosing the Mortgage," Annie Vorwerk; (3.) Speech, "The Right Use of a Penny," Walter Root. Dec. 1879.

**Rev. L. A. Markham: 1881 - 1883**

An account in the Lorain Times of Sept. 26, 1883, tells of Rev. Markham and wife celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary in the M. E. parsonage. It even mentions the gifts they received i.e., "two silver pitchers, one swinging, one standard."

Dr. Wm. Markham, a son of Rev. and Mrs. Markham, kept in touch with the Vorwerk and Whitehouse families. He was a writer and became president of Baker University, Kansas. His late home was Washington, D. C. As a small boy in Lorain, "Willie" helped keep the church clean. He probably had to look after the fire too and carry out the ashes.

**Rev. J. P. Mills: Sept. 1883 - Sept. 1885**

This pastor's photo and history are given in the "Green Book." Civil War service. Simpson Chapel (20th St. Church) started. We find his name in other nearby towns, Amherst, for one. One of his daughters served in the capacity of secretary at Baldwin-Wallace College.

**Rev. W. H. Painter: Sept. 1885 - Sept. 1888**

Somewhere we have a photo of Rev. Painter. At his retirement he chose to live in Lorain. His home was the house that sits on the rear of the lot next to the Emmanuel parsonage. He was a physician turned preacher. Mrs. Painter (second wife) lived there several years after Dr. Painter's death. Mrs. Painter's interesting father, Rev. Wm. Pitezel, a retired missionary to the Indians, lived with the Painter family.

**Rev. Robert McCaskey: Sept. 1888 - Sept. 1890**

A photo and long history of him is in the "Green Book." He was on the "circuit" in 1874 and preached here before he became our regular pastor. Mrs. McCaskey was a short, stout, good-natured person. There were no children.

**Rev. J. Frank Smith: Sept. 1890 - Sept. 1895(?)**

Mrs. Smith has written the story of her husband. It appears in the "Green Book." He was pastor when the little old brick church was torn down and the new one built on Bank St. Rev. Smith compiled the "Green Book."

Mrs. Smith helped in all organizations of the church and kept their four daughters busy, too. An account of her activity is found elsewhere.

**Rev. John Wilson: 1895(?) - 1896**

A tall, stern, stately man who was serious about everything and very definite in his opinions. He was of Scotch-Irish ancestry. In later years he served as pastor of Gawn Ave. Church.

Mrs. Wilson was a small, dainty person, who seemed pleased to permit the two strong male members of the house to be the dominant ones. The son, Jerome, was a scholarly boy. He became professor of Greek in one of our midwestern colleges.

**Rev. Albert Van Camp: 1896 - 1899**

This pastor and his wife were a wonderful elderly white-haired couple of the "old school." Comforting and comfortable to be with. They had no family. During his pastorate, Delaware Ave. Sunday School was started.

**Rev. Frank W. Pole: Sept. 1899 - Sept. 1901**

A very tall young man whose health failed him

while here. The family was obliged to move to the southwest states, where it was thought he might recover. He died while there.

Mrs. Poole was a tower of strength spiritually and did well her part as the pastor's best assistant. Their two children were Helen and Ralph. In later years Mrs. Poole married again, and as Mrs. Krafts lived part of the time in Lakeside, Ohio. Her last place of residence was the Elyria Methodist Home where we often had such splendid visits with her.

**Rev. W. A. Dawson: Sept. 1901 - Sept. 1903**

Was a large, muscular man, with ruddy complexion and white hair. He was a scholar and his sermons demonstrated that fact.

Mrs. Dawson was a large woman, physically, and had a ready smile for everyone. There were four children. The eldest, Charles, was not in residence here, so we did not get to know him. Arch N. was a student at Ohio Wesleyan during his father's pastorate here. He later became a physician, practicing in Lakewood. He died rather young. Mabel attended school here and was later a student at Ohio Wesleyan. A recent visit with her revealed that she had been a teacher in one of the Cleveland high schools for many years, but is now (1956) retired. Her home is in Brecksville. William attended Lorain schools. He was a brilliant scholar, inclined to be on the argumentative side. He became professor of law at Western Reserve University and was called from that position to serve the government as an advisor on our affairs in Europe. He died in Germany. As a young boy here in Lorain he objected very strongly to be called "Willie," when one of the elder sisters of the church so addressed him. It was "William or nothing." No compromise.

Rev. Dawson served as pastor of the Elyria Methodist Church after leaving here. He was active 27 years. He died in Cleveland at the age of 56 years.

**Rev. P. B. Stroup: Sept. 1903 - Sept. 1905**

Small in stature and a merry twinkle in his eye. Came to Lorain from Norwalk. The family formed a happy group, and the young folks called themselves "P.K.'s"—Preachers' Kids. There never seemed to be a dull moment when you were with them.

Six girls and two boys and it was a lucky thing that they were not all home in Lorain at the same time because the parsonage couldn't possibly hold them all. The oldest daughter was a semi-invalid who remained at home most of the time. Bertha was Mrs. Gallup of Norwalk.

Mary and Alice were milliners who worked in different cities during the "season." They always wore "the last word" in hats and we loved that. Grace and Florence were the housekeepers and we'll admit Mrs. Stroup was happy to have their help. Phil and John were in school here. Philip graduating in 1905. Later, at Ohio Wesleyan he was an outstanding football star. He became coach at Cleveland's West High School.

Mrs. Stroup was not too strong. She had a real challenge to keep as sweet as she was with such a busy household. The family had to live in that unpretty, over-crowded parsonage—too close to the church. Grace and John are the only ones living now (1956).

**Rev. E. D. Barnett: Sept. 1905 - Sept. 1910**

A kindly, friendly man who inspired us all. He radiated the goodness of a real human being doing God's work on earth. The Barnetts were all fun-loving people and got a lot out of life. The Barnett home was a good place to go.

Mrs. Barnett taught a young woman's Sunday School class. Capt. Richard Thew and family became great friends of the Barnetts and it must have been because of their frequent visits to the parsonage that they became much aware of the short-comings of the house. Anyway, the Captain strongly urged the Official Board to buy a better home to house our ministers. It was during Rev. Barnett's pastorate that the house on the corner of Reid Ave. and 7th St. was bought.

The Barnetts stayed with us for six years, the limit allowed by Conference regulations. Many of us went to see them often after they were assigned to the Glenville Church in Cleveland.

There were two Barnett children. Edgard Grove Barnett, a student at Ohio Wesleyan during the Lorain pastorate. His last home was in Garrettsville. He died there several years ago. His widow, Mary, still resides there. Bessie graduated from Lorain High School in 1910. When the family moved to Cleveland and after her graduation from Ohio Wesleyan, she was affiliated with the MacPheeter's Insurance agency. Her last known residence was Buffalo, N. Y.

**Rev. N. E. Davis: Sept. 1910 - Sept. 1913**

A good-natured fellow whose sermons covered every subject and wandered far afield from the real text. He always made a wonderful start, then "That reminds me," would take him away. He was good for us in many ways. Rev. and Mrs. Davis were effective singers of Gospel songs and Rev. Davis had time to play the cornet in the Sunday School orchestra. After they left here the General Conference appointed Rev. Davis to have charge of all Methodist Hospitals and Homes. That was a large order and Rev. "Newtie" for Newton proved to be a very efficient administrator. He radiated cheer. His work entailed much traveling throughout the U.S.A.

Mrs. Davis' health was always a deep concern. On their golden wedding anniversary in Ashland, Ohio, she looked as attractive and pleasing as always, but had to stay in a wheel chair. Since retirement the Davises have resided in Florida and his handwriting still shows his propensities. There were no children in this family.

**Rev. Josephus R. Jacob: Sept. 1913 - Sept. 1916**

We have an idea that the parents of Rev. Jacob must have been students of History to have named their son Josephus. Josephus was an early Jewish historian. Dr. Jacob himself gave evidence of being a student of worthwhile subjects. His sermons were never light. They contained substance.

It always seemed as though, in his personal dealings, he was torn between two loyalties, because a member of his family gave him, and us, a hard time. It must have been difficult for him to keep the church and its work on his mind and sometimes we didn't help. When he left here I think he was much troubled.



**Rev. Vernon Wade Wagar: 1916 - 1919**

Dr. Wagar was our pastor during World War I. He hurt the hearts of many of his members who were of British birth by his open criticism of the beginning and conduct of the war. Dr. Wagar is an energetic, nervous fellow. His wit is pretty snappy and sometimes carries a barb. Dr. Wagar was a good musician and urged very strongly that we have the very best choir, choir leader and organist. He himself was an organist.

An early pastorate of his was at 20th St. Methodist. Later he was assigned to Oberlin Church. That was perhaps his favorite charge. There was much to interest him at the college and he had great opportunity to expound his different theories. On his retirement he chose Oberlin as his home and became much in demand as a speaker for clubs and dinners. It would seem as though he has never had a dull moment. And that is good for one of his temperament.

Mrs. Wagar was a quiet, retiring woman. There had to be a balance in the family. There were three children, John, Clara and Pauline.

**Rev. Charles H. Hauger: Sept. 1919 - Sept. 1923**

A serious-minded man, very methodical in his work. He kept a book in which we find a record of the baptisms he performed during his pastorate. There must be other such records but the Historical committee does not have them. Rev. Hauger's successor, Rev. Hess, carried on the record of baptisms and membership.

Mrs. Hauger was a quiet, unassuming woman, much interested in making her husband's work effective. There were no children. At the end of Rev. Hauger's fourth year the membership of the church was near one thousands.

At Christmas time, 1922, the most elaborate Christmas pageant we had ever had was staged by Miss Grace Vorwerk. Some of our local artists contributed their talent to make very elaborate scenery depicting the whole Christmas story.

**Rev. Charles Bentley Hess: 1923 - 1927**

The pastorate of Rev. Hess proved to be full of good works as well as much disaster. Little did he imagine when he and his family came to Lorain in 1923 to begin the 49th year of our regular ministerial service, that "heavy, heavy" hung over his head.

In case you are adding or subtracting around that 49th year, and letting our 100th year puzzle you, remember that in our very first year's we were "on a circuit" and did not have a regular minister.

The story of the destruction of our church by "The Lorain Tornado" is written elsewhere in this history. When you have read that, think of the responsibility resting on Rev. Hess' shoulders and consider how he labored on things other than his normal pastoral duties. When a new church building became a necessity, he and his Official Board lived to know the meaning of the Cross. They were harassed by days and nights of anxiety and labor.

After leaving Lorain Rev. and Mrs. Hess presided over the beautiful Elyria Methodist Home on West Ave. in Elyria. On their retirement from that work they bought a home next door to the Methodist Home where they reside at this time (1956).

Mrs. Hess was always a willing helper in church

affairs. She was especially interested in music, was a member of the choir and had charge of some of the children's work. A very genial lady. The two children were Anna Catherine, who is at present a teacher in the Elyria High School, and John Knox, who has followed in his father's calling. He is now pastor at Chagrin Falls.

**Rev. Elmer Smith: 1927 - 1929**

The pastorate of Rev. Elmer Smith brought us our first "Joash Day." This innovation was suggested by Rev. Smith. It was patterned after the Biblical story of King Joash who found a way to collect money for the repair of the Temple. We have followed his pattern to some extent and it has afforded us a ceremonial way to help lift some of our financial obligations over the years. It is interesting to note the sums deposited in the Chest from year to year. For your own enjoyment and understanding, read the historical account of King Joash in II Kings, Chapters 11 and 12, and II Chronicles, Chapter 24. The names may confuse you, but don't give up.

The honor for designing and building our Chest belongs to Mr. Harry Naylor, a layman of genial personality whose services were always available when something along his line need doing. His daughter, Erma Naylor Askew (Mrs. Alfred T.), told us that her father selected special types of wood and was proud to blend them into the chest he fashioned. It was designed to be easily carried, shoulder high, by four attendants. During the first years of our using the Chest, the attendants were dressed in special costumes resembling those of Bible times. It seemed impressive, but of late that custom of specially-dressed bearers has been discontinued. Some one objected.

After the Chest had been deposited inside the altar rail, the congregation formed a continuous procession down the aisles, all the while singing "We're marching to Zion," as we deposited our envelopes containing our offerings in the Chest. Lately we have changed our tune to "Onward, Christian Soldiers." Now — just so we don't change the whole idea and cease bringing our offerings. Mr. Naylor was much disappointed some years after he made the Chest and we had used it as he made it, to find that someone considered it necessary to paint over his selected wood.

An important event took place Sept. 18-24, 1928, when our church entertained the Annual North-East Ohio Conference of Methodist Churches. This meant a large amount of planning by the women of the church. Mrs. Charles Tope was president of the Ladies' Aid Society at that time. Her efficient service was a great gift she gave to our church for many years.

At about that time also, Mr. Lewis Goodell, one of a long line of servants of the church, advanced the idea of giving time and space at the church for both Boy and Girl Scout activities. Miss Hazel Little and Miss Grace Nichols (both deceased—1956), women with much experience in teaching, were put in charge of Girl Scout affairs. Boy Scouts were in charge of Lewis Goodell, James Gelwicks (regional Scout Master), Richard Fauver, Andrew Keep, Frank Ayres. What! Did the boys need more masterminding than the girls?

Each minister's wife has a different idea of how she can best promote her husband's work. Wouldn't you like to hear some of the parsonage conversations on this subject? Mrs. Elmer Smith was a quiet, retiring lady. She had a ready smile and was pleased to do whatever church work she was asked to do. The Smiths had one son, whose work was in another city, consequently we did not see him often enough to become acquainted. Their later home was in Ashtabula County.

#### **Rev. Homer W. Courtney: April 1929 - 1933**

The spiritual leadership of our parish was continued by Rev. Homer W. Courtney, who came to us from St. Paul's Methodist Church of Tiffin, Ohio. The Official Board record states that the pastor's salary was to be \$4,200.

In 1929 the Official Board sent word to two of our faithful members, Mr. and Mrs. N. B. Hurst in this form, "The Church is yours." They celebrated their golden anniversary that year. Mr. Ralph Hurst, a very faithful member of the Official Board for a long period of years, is their son. Ralph and his wife, Margaret Rosalind King Hurst, were members of the first Historical committee.

Rev. Courtney introduced the use of stereopticon slides in our evening service. A visual sermon was presented which he hoped would bring a goodly attendance and thus carry on a custom that seemed to be going out of favor, the evening service.

In his pastorate, also, there was a Dramatic club formed with Miss Grace Vorwerk in charge. Miss Vorwerk is (1956) the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Vorwerk, who were among the early faithful in the little brick church. Each member of the large Vorwerk family worked in some department of the church.

An amusing story is told of a boat excursion from Lorain to Lakeside during Rev. Courtney's pastorate. It involved a nor'wester storm, young Albert Doane and that good Samaritan, Mr. Frank Proctor. That trip was but a revival of the custom carried on over many years, a boat trip to Lakeside. The good old "Chippewa" carried many happy, some sick, excursionists.

On Joash Chest Day, Dec. 2, 1929, two years after it's initial celebration, Rev. Courtney reported \$3,500. There was a complete church membership list published with the Current Expense and World Service pledge and payment of each member shown. This frank showing of our strength and weakness did not please everyone. Rev. Courtney was always very forthright in his expression of presenting subjects of both financial and personal service. And, he could defend his action in plain talk.

On Sept. 3, 1930, Grace Methodist Church of South Lorain, having been disbanded, its members were invited to join First Church. There is a full story of these members which will appear elsewhere in this History.

Mrs. Celia Bowen Gregg (Mrs. A. S.) retired as organist of our church. Her services extended back over 30 years. Mrs. Gregg belonged to the Lyons and Bowen families, which had been identified with our church many years. Mrs. E. M. McCaskey (Rae George) was elected to fill the position of organist.

A low spot hit Rev. Courtney's service in our

organization when on June 30, 1932, hard times came a knockin' at the door. The great financial depression of that date was making itself felt in the church and salaries could not be paid, thus a reduction was necessary and expenses were reduced to the minimum. The December, 1932, Joash Chest brought only \$1,400, but it was counted as a really sacrificial offering.

The parsonage lady, Mrs. Ethel Courtney, was a tireless worker in every organization of the church. She had a happy way of reaching our hearts. A Christian diplomat, I would say. The Courtney children were Paul, Ruth and Robert. Robert is now (1956) the pastor of one of the Methodist churches in Tiffin, Ohio.

Rev. Courtney served a remarkably successful pastorate at the Elyria Methodist Church. Later he was appointed manager of the Lakeside Association. Since his retirement from that position he has continued to make his residence in Lakeside.

#### **Rev. Battelle McCarty: Sept. 1933 - 1939**

In 1933 a kindly gentleman named Battelle McCarty came to Lorain First Church to guide us in our religious life. His sermons had real spiritual substance, backed by sound thinking. Many people felt that his serious approach to religious problems would no doubt be carried out in his personal, social contacts, but he demonstrated that he had a happy wit and used it well. It seemed as though he enjoyed the surprised look it brought to our faces.

Rev. McCarty seemed conscious that a man of his years had to work hard to interest young people. He did just that and made many firm friends among them. We recall his teaching to the youth group the meaning of the religious symbols found in our beautiful church windows. The ancient religious background as illustrated by these symbols is often lost to us, worrying about present day affairs. A separate article on this subject should be in our History.

During Rev. McCarty's pastorate we were still struggling financially and we began to use Penny Banks to collect our thankful "mites" to help the church. In October, 1934, after eight months' try-out, we counted \$777.94. In that same month, Rev. McCarty cancelled \$1,100 due him in salary. Paying interest on borrowed money was a continuous headache. Financial campaigns were part of our daily exercise, but we had splendid help from our Methodist Church Campaign Bureau, coaching us on the touchy technique.

In 1935, the Penny Banks brought \$1,055. In 1936, we slipped to \$674. Mr. Earl McCaskey, our hustling Sunday School Superintendent, brought in a report which read, "Average attendance, 282; Sunday School rates high socially; Not many outbursts spiritually." Sounds like one of "Mac's" football speeches. Short and right to the point. Mr. Herman Hageman's report on finance, "Best in six years." Another man of few words, but effective accomplishments.

Mrs. McCarty, Nellie, I think he called her, always declared that she knew she was not the type of person who should be a minister's wife. By that I suppose she meant that she never could labor with the sinners or pray in meeting. We liked her just as she was. She exercised her praise through music.

The McCarty's went to live in Alliance after their retirement. On April 15, 1949, they celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary. At that time Dr. McCarty was 82 years of age and Mrs. McCarty 80 years old. I wonder if we ever repaid him the \$1,100 worth of salary he so kindly cancelled when we were hard up!

#### **Rev. Alva I. Cox: 1939 - 1943**

Rev. Alva I. Cox came to First Church, Lorain, in June 1939. This pastorate can be characterized as one of reorganization resulting primarily from the Uniting Conference of Methodist Churches held in Kansas City, May 10, 1939. "The Methodist Church" is the ecclesiastical and lawful successor of the three uniting churches, namely, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the Methodist Protestant Church. This reorganization not only affected the church at large, but every local congregation.

It became the duty of Rev. Cox to take care of the reorganization locally, resulting in changing the names of the organizations functioning within the local church, bringing with it, in most cases, a different emphasis: The Sunday School became the Church School; the Epworth League, became the Methodist Youth Fellowship, M.Y.F.; the Ladies' Aid, Women's Foreign Missionary Society, Women's Home Missionary Society, became the Women's Society of Christian Service; the Men's Club, became Methodist Men.

Early in the pastorate, Rev. Cox was assisted by Deaconess LaDonna Bogardus, who in turn organized our Church School as we now know it, particularly in the expanded session of the Beginners, Primary and Junior Departments. Throughout this pastorate Miss Bogardus proved to be a most efficient office secretary, as well as a worker with our youth groups.

Rev. and Mrs. Cox were the proud parents of five children, among them a pair of twins. That was the largest number of children that had graced the parsonage for some time and the house seemed to be bursting at the seams. The house needed considerable repairing. Rev. Cox suggested that a new home would be most acceptable and strange as it may seem, we agreed with him, after due deliberation. Consequently the parsonage on the northwest corner of Reid Ave. and 7th St., that had served around 35 years, was sold in March, 1941, for \$41,000. A much better home at a much more desirable location was bought at 1134 6th St. It cost \$8,500. A mortgage of \$4,500 was necessary.

Penny banks slipped to \$38.44. No one boosted them. Joash Chest yielded \$2,000 in 1941, \$1,550 in 1942. With the complete church debt standing at \$41,660, we seem to, necessarily, keep working at top speed.

During Dr. Cox's term here, the Official Board approved recommendation to Conference for Alva Cox, Jr., a student at Baldwin-Wallace, that he be given a license to preach. Miss Theresa Powell, an invalid member of our church, gave a substantial Record Book to be used as a World War II service register. Rev. Cox was noted for his "Dare and Do" propensity. He successfully challenged the men of the church to liquidate Current Expense obligations.

The Dramatic Group presented the wonderful play, "Family Portrait," with Rachel McCaskey (Mrs. E. M.), our organist, starring as "Mary" the Mother of Christ. It was so well performed that we were asked to repeat it during the Lakeside Summer Season.

The changes instituted in the Sunday School program, to go along with the new look in Methodism, were not well received. Many of the faithful were hurt by the clean sweep. Rev. Cox was no wheedler. His sermons convinced us that he was a pacifist as far as war was concerned, but he exhibited real militarism in tearing out the old and putting in the new.

The writer would like to pay tribute to Mrs. Cox for her understanding, her friendliness and devoted service. In 1943, Rev. Cox was appointed Executive Director of the North-East Ohio Conference Board of Education, in which capacity he still serves.

#### **Rev. Charles F. Jones: 1943 - 1949**

Rev. Jones' manner of walking demonstrates that he is a man of energy. When you see him going down the street you know he is on his way to a busy day. When he was our pastor he had great concern for some of the members of our church and Sunday School whose ill health was causing them distress. He succeeded in creating interest in the case of Miss Theresa Powell, who had been bed-fast for many years. Through efficient treatment and many prayers, Theresa was able to graduate to a wheel-chair and finally to do a limited amount of walking.

In our Sunday School were two children who were born "blue babies," Leonora and Frank Valentini. Through Rev. Jones their illness was brought to the attention of that full-of-good-works lady, Mary Lee Tucker, and the Lorain Journal. Many willing people helped create the necessary funds to send these children to Johns-Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, where they were cured of their distressing heart trouble. For the great service done for them it would seem that Rev. Jones and our church should receive their everlasting gratitude, but we have lost them along the way somewhere. The parents and the children were all baptized into the church, but the parents say that they do not feel at home with us. Can anyone think of the reason for such a feeling? Where do we fail?

Many other thoughtful and gracious things were done by Rev. Charles F. and Mrs. Leta Jones. They had much concern for the boys in service and their parents. The "Messenger" of those years bears witness to the gratitude of those boys for the many letters received by them from the church and for the "Messenger" also. The book, "Till We Meet Again," was sent to each one and we learned that each copy was lent many times to others in service.

While our church has always observed the usual Holy Seasons, Rev. Jones brought to our attention more of what is called the Church Calendar with more of the various Seasons of the Church Year. It has been said of us, that Methodists cannot live up to the Gothic architecture of our beautiful church. There's cause for a large argument, if you want to take over from there. Does the type of architecture necessarily dictate the type of service to be used?

Rev. Jones thought that one way to acknowledge the Gothic idea would be to dignify the room called the basement dining room by renaming it "The Great Hall." That was hard going for some folks, to link the practical with the artistic. No person or thing is hurt by having dignity.

One of the real tests during Rev. Jones' pastorate was the necessity of having several financial crusades. The Official Board, whose members all through the years are worthy of special mention, worked diligently, fiercely, at times, to wipe out our debt. The record of the burning of the church mortgage will be found in another article.

One of our members, Mrs. C. P. Dodge, generously provided money for two wonderful additions to our church, the Dodge Memorial Chapel, mentioned elsewhere, and the Deagan Chimes added to the facilities of the organ. Mrs. Dodge spent her last few years at the Methodist Home in Elyria.

The "Messenger" was brought in to being. The make-up of this leaflet took a great deal of time. It was mailed to all church members weekly, in time for us to acquaint ourselves with the next Sunday's services plus some church news. To conform to postal regulations, for the price paid for postage, the "Messenger" had to contain a certain percentage of general news. That curtailed the amount of our own church news.

Do you agree that Rev. Jones had busy, productive years during his pastorate here? On leaving Lorain, Rev. and Mrs. Jones were assigned to the church in Cambridge, Ohio. Mrs. Kenneth Erb, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Jones, was a frequent visitor to Lorain. She made a splendid addition to our choir whenever she came. Mrs. Jones sang with us too. The music in our church received a great deal of encouragement and help from the entire family.

#### Rev. John Green, D.D.: 1949 - 1956

We could describe him as a man with a decisive step and a forward leaning as if there was something important ahead for him to do. And there was and he did it well. His natural ability, quick perception and alertness are wonderful assets. His study and reading are so extensive that he is master of many subjects. His preaching is full of assurance. Dr. Green is a tireless worker for the church. Often we could not measure up to his ideas and that was a disappointment to him. We lesser lights do feel our

inadequacy about things spiritual, but we do have a knowledge of our special work and attendant subjects. Church work is not always first with us. There-in is a problem for the pastor. Dr. Green was an acknowledged leader among the other ministers in Lorain. It would be interesting to get a mouse-eye view of one of the Ministerial Association discussions. Do you think—? No, they could always agree on one subject, anyway.

During Dr. Green's pastorate there were many Lorain people, not members of our church, who came to listen to his sermons. He made people think. Dr. Green was fond of music and his voice rang out in the hymns. It was his custom to have people express their preference in hymns and he would set aside certain Sundays when we could spend time to sing several of the old favorites. He also spent time to bring to our attention the newer hymns (we Methodists get "revision" on hymns quite often). By carefully analyzing them he would arouse our interest to learn them.

Dr. and Mrs. Green took a great deal of personal interest in forming young-adult groups. There were many new people of that age who came to join us.

Mrs. Green came to Lorain highly recommended as a reviewer of books. Another of her interests was drama. Her talents were employed extensively while she lived here. She was also well read in the literature of the church and conducted many classes among the women. Those who attended the classes profited greatly but the attendance was somewhat disappointing to Rev. and Mrs. Green, who worked so hard to keep church work and church subjects first in our lives. It was a bit different to have the parsonage lady so interested in drama. What minister's wife of not so many years back could come forward and make known her intense liking for that form of art? Do you recall how the early, early church used drama to teach the interests of the church?

Rev. John and Mrs. Ethel Green were assigned to the Norwalk church this year (1956). We were happy to have had them serve our church that extra year that was accorded us by the Conference. Dr. Green came to Lorain in 1949 after having served a term as the superintendent of Mansfield District of the Methodist Church. Mrs. Wyatt, the former Marilyn Green, still resides in Mansfield.

It was Dr. Green who urged the completion of this Methodist Church History for our 100th year celebration.



## They Also Served

■ THE HISTORY OF this church would not be complete without mentioning some of our members who were especially dedicated to preaching the Gospel. There were five retired ministers who made their homes in Lorain and became a part of our congregation, assisting in the work of the church wherever they were able.

Rev. John Pitzeel, missionary to the Northwest Indians, has been mentioned elsewhere in our story.

Rev. William Painter, mentioned elsewhere.

Rev. Albert N. Harris, former pastor of Delaware Ave. church. Last place of residence, Elyria Methodist Home. Died in 1944.

Rev. J. H. Smith, former pastor of Grace Church, South Lorain. Father of Mrs. Robert Burke.

These four men were the older type pastoral garb, the Prince Albert coat. That was in the days before robes were used.

Rev. Boyd L. George, former pastor and district superintendent in another part of Ohio. Father of Mrs. E. M. McCaskey. A valued Sunday School teacher of adult class. Mrs. George lives at the McCaskey home. Dr. George died in 1956.

Then there were five local preachers: Mr. George Wickens, Sr., story elsewhere; Mr. Samuel Butler; Mr. Edwin Lewis. These three received their licenses in England and did service in small churches there. Mr. Butler served in many offices of our church. He was a great reader and was always ready to further the great cause of religion anywhere, anytime, with argument or persuasion. His wife and one daughter served as presidents of the different women's organizations. The other daughter, Mrs. Flora Butler White, still lives in Lorain and serves in Circle work. Mr.

Butler gave a great deal of time to serving as supply pastor for Simpson Chapel and the church at Vincent. Wherever he worked at his daily work, the men who were associated with him respected him as a good Christian man.

Mr. Edwin Lewis was one of the older generation who also wore a Prince Albert coat to designate his ministerial calling. His grand-daughter, Miss Ada Leitenberger, is one of our members who came to us from Grace Church. Mrs. Louisa Lewis Leitenberger, his daughter tells of going out with her father, when she was a young girl in England, and that they would walk many miles from one small church to another so that those in the rural districts could have a church service. That is real devotion to a cause. Mr. Lewis was killed here in Lorain while at work at the Lorain Lumber Co. sawmill. We find the Lewis family names as subscribers to our 1892 church.

Mr. H. D. Root and Mr. E. A. Read were our other two local preachers. Mr. Root's family story is given elsewhere in this history. He was born here in Black River township in 1833. He was a master ship-builder. Little is remembered about Mr. Read's background. He was a quiet, devout man whose testimony in meeting was always ready.

A word of praise should be given to our newest type helpers, the young theological students who come to gain experience for their future work. They were Mr. Charles V. Ireland, Mr. DeForrest Winner (now assistant in a Cleveland church), Mr. Rodney Vernon, Mr. Paul Gibbons. These young men came to us from the Oberlin School of Theology.

Mr. Finney of long ago Oberlin, who wanted to discourage the Methodists, would be surprised if he came back, wouldn't he?

## The Lake Captains

■ OUR CHURCH ALWAYS had a good supply of lake captains in the early days. Their numbers have been fewer since the ships became larger and the big companies took over, but the line did not run out in our church till the 1930's. They were a most interesting breed of man, good-natured, hearty individuals noted for a twinkle in the eye, but very forceful personalities with a strong sense of responsibility and steel in the voice when need be. Capt. Ralph Lyons was the last of them unless or until we grow a new one. He was a tall, handsome man, graceful and gracious, who sailed the giant freighters for the Great Lakes Steamship Co., the youngest son of W. S. Lyons, brother of Mrs. Bowen, and the father of Mary Lyons Brandt. He was raised in our church, became a charter member of the Congregational Church when he was a young man associating with the Gillmore young people, returned to the Methodist fold when he married Jeanette Vorwerk, and remained a Methodist until his death in 1945 at the age of 85. He was one of Great Lake's outstanding captains, and brought out most of their new ships.

Among the earliest ones were Armstead Lumm and Steve Ketcham who sailed the old schooners Capt. Lumm was a class leader and steward from the organization of the church until his death in 1859. Capt. Ketcham lived long enough to be one of nine lake captains who contributed very substantially to the building fund of the brick church on Reid Ave. in 1892.

Later captains who sailed the freighters included Capt. J. R. Robinson who lived in the old parsonage at the West Erie and Washington Aves. with his family after it ceased to be a parsonage, Capt. Truman Moore who was the grandfather of Harry Jones and Esther Jones VanArman, and Capt. Ingram who lived on the East Side and became very interested in Anti-Saloon League work. Capt. Simon Gillmore was among the contributors to the church building fund but he left religion to other members of his family; he was an uncle of Mrs. Bratenfeld.

Capt. C. B. Chapman and Charles M. Swartwood were both among the outstanding tug Captains. Chapman was the oldest son of Elizabeth and James Chapman, and the step-grandfather of Mrs. George

Damon. Swartwood was a step-son of Mrs. W. S. Lyons. Capt. Swartwood's tug used to tow the big fellows across Tawas Bay, known to the lake sailors as a "mean place to cross" in Lake Huron. One night the tug captains all got together for a sociable evening while thirteen ships were waiting for a tow, agreeing among themselves not to talk business with the ship captains till the next morning. Capt. Swartwood was an early riser, and when the other tug captains awoke they were greeted with the sight of Charlie's tug towing all thirteen vessels in a string behind him across the bay. Someone took a picture of it, and for many years copies of that picture of Swartwood's famous tow decorated more than a few living room walls.

After 1872 we had to divide our lake captains with the Congregationalists and we split a pair of Bullock brothers exactly between us, they getting Capt. Orlen E. while we got Capt. Austin E. Inasmuch as the two brothers married sisters the division seems strange, but it came about very naturally. Their father, Asa Bullock, was a Congregationalist of old New England stock who married a Baptist wife in Columbia Center. The Columbia Baptist church had a closed communion, and the Sunday after their wedding all non-members were asked to step out into the vestry when communion was served. Mrs. Bullock went out to the vestry with her husband, and when someone afterward protested, she said, "Where Asa goes, I go" and joined the Congregational church there. They came to Lorain in 1865 and joined our church, there being no other choice at the time. When the Congregational church here was organized they transferred to it and Capt. Orlen went with them. Capt. Austin and his wife had made so many friends in our church, however, that his wife did not want to leave so that family stayed with us. Capt. Austin E. was the father of Florence Bullock who married Fred Johnson, and also raised his niece, Mrs. Ralph Hurst, after her mother died.

Among the most respected captains who sailed the biggest ships were Captains Henry Wallace, Richard Thew, Robert Cowley, and Thomas Wilford. Capt. Wallace came to Lorain as an immigrant from North Ireland in 1850, and his lake career spanned the change from sail to steam. He had three daughters, Mrs. Hills, Mrs. Lillie MacElfresh, and the third wife of George Wickens, Sr., Elizabeth Wallace Wickens. Many people who grew up in the church can well remember Mrs. MacElfresh and Mrs. Wickens. There was also a son, Harvey, who drowned in a tragic accident shortly after his graduation from high school when he slipped and fell into the hold.

Capt. Thew was probably the most successful of all captains for he invented the Thew Shovel and helped to found the Thew Shovel Co. here. He brought his family from Caledonia to Lorain to live around the turn of the century, and was always a generous contributor to the church. Many church people remember his daughters, Susan and Carol, who sang in the choir.

Capt. Cowley and Captain Wilford were especially notable among them. Robert J. Cowley was a second-generation Manxman, served in the Union Navy toward the end of the Civil War as Bos'n's Mate on a brig with the Farragut Fleet at Mobile Bay, and

married Celia Lyons, a daughter of W. S. Lyons. He sailed for the Corrigan Line and eventually became Commodore of the Fleet, a job which as his daughter Katherine Wire explained, "meant he had to look after the boats in the winter when they were tied up." He was deeply devoted to the church and to Anti-Saloon League work. He was a tall, thin rangy man and in church always sat at the end of the pew with his long legs stretched into the aisle. Capt. Wilford and his family usually sat directly in front of the Cowleys in the choirloft of the old brick church on North Washington Ave. The ministers of that period were rather given to nautical illustrations in their sermons, presumably to appeal to the congregation's interest, but not always with full understanding of the nautical terminology involved. When a particularly inept illustration of that sort emanated from the pulpit, Capt. Wilford used to reach down and tweak Capt. Cowley's trouserleg. Both retained properly serious and sober expressions throughout, but the congregation were watching, and used to enjoy it hugely. The Cowleys had three children but only one, Mrs. Wire, remained in Lorain. One son, Dr. Robert Cowley, who grew up in the church, became the college physician at Berea, Kentucky, and received several honorary degrees for his medical research.

Capt. Wilford was a man of stockier build than Cowley. He was born in Northamptonshire, England, and was brought to this country as a child by his parents. He came to Lorain to work in the shipyard and married the schoolteacher, Fanny Gilmore, the only Gilmore incidentally who remained in the Methodist church after the Congregational church was organized. They had two daughters, Cora, who married Charles Bartenfeld, and Adelaide, who died at 16 years of age. The Wilfords and Bartenfelds have been so active in the church and given so much that few people realize that Capt. Wilford was one of the long line of "hold-outs" who have attended church faithfully, served it willingly, and supported it generously but who never actually joined it. His family all belonged, of course. He sailed for the Richardson Line, and ultimately became Commodore of the Fleet.

All of the older captains used to take their families sailing with them frequently, and the children became well conversant with the lore of the lakes. Capt. Wilford had his family and one of their friends along with him on the steamboat Osborne in the summer of 1884. They started down the lakes from Marquette on a beautiful Sunday morning on July 27th. Quoting from the account in the Lorain Herald "as the afternoon hours came on, the company grouped themselves in the cabin and united in such exercises as seemed suitable for the day, and as suited their tastes and sentiments. . . . Many of the songs used in Sunday Schools and social meetings were sung, the scriptures were read and the Sunday School lesson studied, the first steward acting as teacher." As night came on, a thick fog arose. The children (Mrs. Bartenfeld was then eleven years old) were put to bed, but Mrs. Wilford, again quoting from the Herald "Whose motherly instincts and affections would take alarm at any indications of danger, more for her little ones than herself. . . . took her place

for an hour or two by her husband's side on deck near the bow of the boat." The danger involved was that they were approaching the Soo locks in a narrow, heavily-travelled sea lane in the heavy fog, with two hours to pass before they reached the more open waters of Whitefish Bay.

The Osborne proceeded carefully, whistling regularly, when suddenly they crossed whistles with an approaching up-bound boat, the Alberta, bound for Duluth. (In lake traffic the downbound boat had the right-of-way. One whistle meant "Go to the starboard" and two meant "Go to the port." Whichever the first boat whistles the second answers, and if the first whistles one and the second two, they are said to "cross whistles". It always meant trouble. Suddenly the Alberta itself loomed out of the fog all lit up, as Mrs. Bartenfeld described it, "like a great, big factory." Mrs. Wilford cried, "Tom! That boat's going right through us!" Very quietly Capt. Wilford answered, "I know it," and almost as he spoke the Alberta struck the Osborne square in the side, slightly aft, bursting through her steel hull into the engine room and filling the Osborne with escaping steam.

"Keep your nose in the gap!" Capt. Wilford shouted to the Alberta, and the Alberta did. Had she withdrawn, the Osborne would have sunk instantly, but as it was there were six or seven precious minutes for rescue. Capt. Wilford lifted his wife up to the Alberta then ran along the deck through the steam and was lowered by a rope to get to the cabin where his daughters had been. Both of them had run on to the deck in their night clothes thinking the ship had run aground. When they saw what had happened, Cora wanted to go back and get dressed but a deckhand told her there wasn't time and lifted her up into the rigging. The steward, Mr. Austin, rescued Addie and rushed with her through the scalding steam holding his arm across his face and keeping the little girl's face close to him. He handed her up to the deck of the Alberta then went back through the steam for the mangled and scalded sailors below. Capt. Wilford, seeing his daughters and guest were safe, had himself lowered on a rope again to the Osborne, and a few minutes later was pulled up to the deck of the Alberta with the ship's papers in his hand as the Osborne sank beneath him. She went down with a terrible suction, carrying many trapped sailors with her. Again,

quoting the Herald "The steward Austin. . . seized a stanchion and with his arm around it was carried under water, but with the suction of the water the stanchion was broken, and with the cabin arose to the surface, bringing Austin with it. How deeply he was submerged, he knew not, but happily found himself on the surface, and was picked up by a boat lowered from the Alberta."

On board the Alberta the survivors were desperate. All of them were burned and scalded—although Mrs. Bartenfeld carried no permanent scars her skin was extremely sensitive to heat and cold all the rest of her life—and the engineer, Martin Burns, peeled the skin off his arm and hand just like a glove. They had only their night clothes, so a drummer on his way to Duluth opened his trunks and helped them out. He had heavy flannel shirts, thick woolen stockings, sweaters, and a general assortment of lumberjack clothing intended for the lumbermen in the North Woods. None of them fitted the refugees but they wore them anyhow. The survivors were transferred to the first downbound boat they met, which happened to be the steambarge Hecla.

Word of the disaster had reached Lorain quickly, but not with the richness of detail that later appeared in the Lorain Herald. When the Wilfords arrived home the next Sunday morning, the people were all in church praying for them and not yet knowing who had survived or how badly injured they were. The Wilfords lived right across the street from the church so they went right on over and walked in in their heavy lumberjack clothing—perhaps the most stupendous answer to prayer our church has ever known. There was not a dry eye in the place. Everyone wept unrestrainedly and it broke up the service completely.

Yes, the early lake history is full of tragedy as well as romance and adventure. Accustomed as the townspeople became to it they were never inured, and each new one brought with it the same agony of worry and suspense, no less keen because familiar.

Perhaps more prayers have ascended from our church over danger and tragedy on the lakes than for any other reason. Now such tragedies occur more rarely, thanks to a more efficient coast guard, radar, and especially to our Herman Hageman and the ship-to-shore telephone.

—Catherine Gregg, 1956

# Church Buildings

## Building Number One

■ "IN THE HOLLOW by the Foundry. "Under the Hill."

Both interesting phrases telling the "where" of the first little old building used as a church.

The "Hollow" was indeed a low spot on Lake St. (1st St.) between Elyria Rd. (N. Bdw.) and Washington Ave. about where our City Parking lot is now (1956).

The "Hill" was really a high spot on the corner of Elyria Rd. (N. Bdw.) and Lake St. (1st St.). The two streets met at right angles. Now the corner has been rounded off to make way for more B. & O. tracks. The building referred to was said to be the first frame building erected in the village. It was only 16x24 feet which seems pretty small. The owners were Daniel T. Baldwin and Sophia Reid Baldwin and the building was occupied by Jacob Vetter and his family as a residence and shoe-making shop. We are still searching to find out more about Jacob Vetter to see what he thought about giving up his place of business for a church organization — not his. We do know that he and his wife were in the group that founded our neighbor church, Emanuel Evangelical in 1853, in the home of Widow Brown (Braun?) corner of Hamilton and 4th St.

This small frame building was moved from "the Hollow" to Lot 108 on west side of Washington Ave. near Main St. (W. Erie) which was owned by the Baldwins. What a wrenching it must have had. According to the testimony in Court, (when ownership was in question) it needed much repairing. Parts of the floor and underpinning, belfry, windows lengthened — made higher to look more churchy and a general straightening needed attention.

"Tis said" that Capt. James Day engineered the repairs with the help of his family, Capt. J. W. Randall and out-of-town friends. The Days and the Randalls lived southeast and east of the village. When completed, this building was to be used as a Presbyterian Church. The story of how it came into the possession of the Methodists is brought out in the Court action, mentioned before.\*

If you would like to follow the many movings to which this plain old building was subjected, read on.

After the Methodists had used this structure a few years they had growing pains and decided that they needed a more substantial brick church. Accordingly this outgrown, out-moded building was again put on skids and moved to Lot 205 — corner of Duane St. (4th St.) and Washington Ave. which was designated on the original town plat as reserved for a "Meeting House".

The moving was described by Mr. Quartus Gillmore Jr., one of the township trustees. Among other things he said when they got the building as far as \*Edmund Gillmore's house, along the West side of the Town Square (Washington Park) that they bogged down in the mud and left the building where it was until the road became passable. I wonder what the families along that row — top residential — were saying! Court records again show a difference of opinion as to whether the Methodists used that building after it

was placed on Lot 205. People's memories do not show up at their best in Court. They appear as movable and moved as many times as the small wooden church.

At any rate, when the Methodists no longer needed the traveling church, it was used by the newly formed Congregational Church Society until its membership seemed to warrant a new, larger structure.

The next move was to Lot 206 (?) and it was used as a school.

Then Mr. Joseph Moisey, an eccentric Englishman, who knew how to live on little and save much, bought or was given the building, and he had it moved south on Washington Ave. and set it up on a lot he owned between 1st and 2nd Ave. (8th and 9th St.) with the long side facing the street. He divided it with partitions, making it into a two-family house. The writer can remember that house looking as though it had served its time. But five moves had done something to a rather unimportant looking building. It looked cold around the edges, but there must have been some warm feelings generated inside.

## Building Number Two

The little brick church built on Lot 109 and, I'm afraid, partly on Lot 108 (Court Records) — North Washington St. The accompanying picture reveals its outward appearance. The "drive-in" and sheds for the horses and carriages are not seen.

A recorded description of the inside is as follows:

The little brick church had a seating capacity of 250 on the floor and 25 in the little balcony which extended across the entire East end (over the entrance) of the church. The balcony had sliding glass windows and could be shut off from the larger room. The primary group of the Sabbath School occupied the balcony. The pews were arranged with double rows in the center and single rows on the sides next to the walls.

The rostrum extended about two thirds of the way across the front or West end of the building with a railing about a foot high which had an opening at the North where the minister entered the rostrum. There was also an opening abreast of the left hand aisle where the choir entered the South corner of the rostrum, which was their station. A marble topped table stood on the rostrum back of the pulpit. On the wall above the table hung a picture of a cross with the words, "Simply to Thy Cross I Cling." This picture was placed in the Sunday School department of the new church on Sixth St. and was destroyed at the time of the Lorain tornado (1928) as was also the Bible from the little church. I wonder what happened to the old reed organ that was used in the old brick church?

The rostrum and aisles were carpeted with ingrain carpet (probably never seen now—1956).

The windows were just clear glass with shades, and the room was lighted with a chandelier suspended from the ceiling in the center of the church. There were also side lights — all of which were kerosene lamps.

The pews were not cushioned (unless you brought your own).

The building was heated with a coal furnace placed below the auditorium in somewhat of a basement



but was little more than a dug-out.

Grandpa Standen, a long-time faithful member of the Church always occupied an arm chair (rocker?) on the platform (rostrum) just at the right of the pulpit, as he was quite deaf. He was as much of a church fixture as the pastor himself.

### Building Number Three

Quoting the Christian Advocate of Oct. 4, 1941: "When the physical structure of the church in a community is neglected or in other ways fails to reflect the prosperity that God has showered upon us, that church falls short of its greatest potential capacity to reveal the glory of God. . . ."

When the brick church on the corner of Bank St. (6th) and Reid Ave. was being planned, the architect gave us his idea of a building that would "reflect the prosperity, etc." Today, in looking at the picture of it, we know that it really would not satisfy us now and "we have been led to want something different in architecture because we have responded to the cultivation of an understanding of the significance of worship." (This last quotation also from Advocate.)

This brick church, number three in our series of building, was typically Methodist as you will see further on. It stood very close to Reid Ave. on the west side and on the east side of the church property stood the parsonage—close by, as if to keep warm.

The following is a description of the inside of the church, written in 1952, at the request of Dr. John Green.

This will indeed be a flying visit to the physical structure of the old first church building, without letting you know about the spirit that went into the building of it nor acquainting you with the good accomplished by the company of saints and lesser personalities who raised their monument to God.

There was no enchanting mystery or majesty of architecture here. The building was widely open and all inclusive from the auditorium—sanctuary, we say now—through the large Sunday School section.

The church was built at a time when the development of the Sunday School was uppermost in churchmen's minds. It was termed the "Akron plan" because a prominent layman, Mr. Miller, of Akron, was forwarding this idea in working with our Methodist Bishop Vincent on the Chautauqua idea, entertainment. This open-style church lent itself to the holding of lectures, concerts, etc., for community pleasure.

This splendid picture of the outward appearance of the building will make it unnecessary for me to comment on it except to say, I could not recall whether or not there was a bell in the tower. Asked Miss Vorwerk this morning. She said, "No bell."

If you come with me through either one of the Bank St. (now 6th St.) entrances you will see continuing stairways and platforms going up into the tower structures, leading to the back of the choir and organ loft and on up to the balconies, also a stairway down to a small room under the organ and choir.

These Bank St. entrances were not too popular, for in going on into the sanctuary you found yourself facing the audience. Someone suggested that perhaps this had a tendency to make people sit in the oft-looked-at front pews.

There were three sections of seats, set in semi-circular fashion to follow the line of the communion

rail and pulpit or rostrum. There were four aisles. One on each side of the church between the pews and the outer walls of the church and two radial aisles from the altar rail. These radial aisles made the middle section of seats with shorter length pews in front, graduating to much longer ones in the rear. The last few seats being again divided by a short aisle from the back. The reverse graduation or graduation of seats was true of the two outer sections of seats.

Back of the main auditorium was the Sunday School assembly room, surrounded by class rooms on two levels. The separation of the two auditoriums was by movable partition. It could be lifted into the upper regions by rope mechanism. Sometimes the ropes did not retain their heavenly uplift.

The balconies, beforementioned, extended into the Sunday School section. The two auditoriums with the balconies made an impressive seating arrangement. These balconies were also connected again in front, with the choir loft and rostrum or pulpit.

Now that we are at the front of the church let's look at the pulpit and choir loft. The pulpit itself was rather narrow and the intervening space between it and the altar rail was often covered with properly fitted platform sections to give added space for group programs. Immediately back of the pulpit on a slightly higher elevation, was the choir (sometimes called the War Dept.). In the days of gay apparel and hats worn by the choir, before the wearing of robes, this setting was quite disturbing. Too often the pastor had to struggle for attention from his congregation. Can you see the choir wiggle and giggle if they saw something out of the ordinary going on in the audience?

The organ, with its impressive array of pipes, was also very prominent, as was the young boy, or sometimes boys, who lent their strong right arms to the pumping of the organ. Later, when water power was installed, we were still disturbed by strange noises.

The Reid St. entrance was the one most used. It was reached by stone steps from the street. These stone steps proved to be very treacherous in winter because ice formed quickly on them. An enclosure was finally built over them. The Reid St. entrance opened into a good sized vestibule from which there were entrances to the back of the sanctuary, Sunday School auditorium, stairs up to the top tier of class rooms and down to the basement dining room and kitchen. The present Elyria Methodist Church has a Sunday School section like the one we had. That gallery was a wonderful place.

At first our dining room and kitchen in the lower floor (basement) were confined to the space immediately below the Sunday School section. It was given over to the Primary Dept. and little red chairs on Sunday.

Later, excavations were made under the entire church building making added dining and class room space. A far cry from the first little old church on Washington Ave., when the church pews had been removed in order to have a "sociable."

The church windows were of the type largely used in the 1890 era, and right for the architecture of the day. Window styles, too, have changed over the years. The artist who designs them has a rare faculty. We wish we might recreate the design of one of our 1892 church windows for you. When you observe the

outward look of the building notice the windows and think that on the inside you would have been able to observe the names of some of our early church members memorialized by those windows of beautifully colored glass. Picture windows, not of the kind we have today. Somewhere there is a list of donors for those windows.

#### Building Number Four

Plans for the new M. E. Church building were furnished by Nicklas and Roderich, Cleveland architects. The general style of the building is English Gothic of the Perpendicular period. The exterior walls are faced with rough sawed Indiana limestone in variegated harmonious tints of warm grays to a rusty buff in tone.

The trimmings, including the beautiful tracery windows of the auditorium, are of selected gray Indiana limestone. The roof is of varying sizes of mottled green and purple slate. With few exceptions the windows of the social part of the building are of the best type of steel casement sash.

As it should be, the dominating part of the building is the auditorium. This is cruciform in shape and including the channel is about 40 by 80 feet in size exclusive of the transepts.

The seating capacity, including that of the balcony over the narthex or foyer is 800. The choir which extends across the back of the pulpit platform is of oak in beautiful tracery design. The ceiling is formed by a major arch over the main part with secondary arches or groins over the windows and the arcade separating transepts from the main part, this giving the room a lofty and impressively interesting and beautiful form.

Above the choir and at the back of the chancel are three beautiful lancet windows set with English antique glass in the richest of colors. The central panel contains the figure of The Christ. The other tracery windows are set with a combination domestic and

imported antique leaded stained glass in interesting and appropriate designs.

The main entrance is through a vaulted narthex entered from 6th St., and with secondary entrances opening on a wide corridor leading to Reid Ave. at one end and to a private walk on the east side.

Opening on the west transept and forming an extension of it when opened up is the general church parlor, a fine large room with open fireplace and stone mantel. This parlor is separated from the auditorium by means of a sound-proof lifting partition decorated same as the other wall surfaces.

When occasions arise that there is need for a larger seating capacity than the auditorium provides, 200 additional sittings are available by using this parlor.

The church school and recreation part of the building is at the back of the auditorium, the main floor being on the same level. This floor contains the primary and beginners department, a large parlor for mid-week meetings, the church office, study, etc., and on the floor above, the junior and intermediate department with their separate assembly rooms and adjoining private class rooms, the ladies' parlor, an exceptionally beautiful room with a connecting kitchen.

The ground floor beneath the auditorium part, the dining and social room with stage at one end, and picture machine booth at other end, a large kitchen to the east and large parlor on the west. Beneath the school part is the recreation room, 40 by 70, separate shower and locker room for both sexes, and beneath the locker rooms, a heating and ventilating plant.

The building is planned and erected in full accordance with the state code. All stairways and corridors are of fireproof construction and floor and roofs supported by steel beams and trusses.

The heating plant is of the best and most modern low pressure steam type, with smokeless type boilers, automatic temperature regulation, and separate ventilating fans for the three principal sections of the building.

## Church Dedication

The magnificent new First Methodist Episcopal church building, constructed at a cost of nearly a quarter of a million dollars at Reid Ave and 6th St., on the site of another house of worship which was destroyed by the 1924 tornado, was formally added to the city's religious and cultural wealth Sunday.

One of the most beautiful structures of its kind in the entire state, it was dedicated by Bishop Theodore S. Henderson, of Cincinnati, at the first of 11 days of dedicatory exercises which will mark the latest splendid contribution to Lorain's reputation as "the city of beautiful churches."

Two services, at which the auditorium of the new religious edifice was crowded to its seating capacity of 1,200 people, marked the first day's program.

"This has been the proudest day of my life!" the Rev. Charles Hess, pastor of the church, declared, as the last of the crowd which attended the second service had filed out, leaving him alone with Bishop Henderson, the head of his church in Ohio.

"You should be—you are to be congratulated!" was the church leader's reply as he grasped the minister's hand and then hurried away to make railroad connections for Cincinnati, where he is scheduled to appear in his official capacity Monday.

And the Rev. Mr. Hess was highly deserving of those congratulatory words from his bishop, as he had worked unceasingly ever since the tornado of more than two years ago which swept away what had been the original First M. E. church building, to make the present new edifice possible, it was voiced by the hundreds of his flock who participated in the day's exercises and inspected the church building. The city was officially represented at the evening service by Mayor William F. Grall, Safety Director Mrs. Florence Grall and Judge J. F. Strenick.

It was during the evening services that the dedicatory exercises were held. Bishop Henderson also spoke at the morning service.

The bishop's appeals for funds, at both services, to

be used toward paying off the church's indebtedness, resulted in contributions totaling more than \$26,000. Of this amount \$10,000 was pledged by the Ladies' Aid Society of the church. The \$26,000 pledged Sunday was in addition to those made in the drive conducted for the building of the church, more than a year ago.

The preliminary dedicatory exercises in the morning were preceded by a parade of members from the high school auditorium, where they have held services since the tornado robbed them of their religious home, to the new church building.

Bishop Henderson gave a short address at the preliminary service and in his plea for funds referred to Simon of Cyrene who lifted the cross as it was being borne by Jesus Christ, and urged that in their response all be "lifters, not leaners." This plea resulted in pledges totaling more than \$10,000.

In his evening address, which resulted in more than \$16,000 being pledged, the famous bishop made an appeal to the "Burning Heart."

"Real Christians are the products of a burning heart," he told his audience. "Jesus Christ had a burning heart—He gave everything so that we might have the wonderful blessings He is daily bestowing upon us.

"We must take our religion seriously—take it to heart—a burning heart—just as Jesus Christ did.

"No one can be a Christian of the head—he must be a Christian of the heart if he is a real Christian."

He also contended that there is too little "conversation about Christ."

"To be real Christians of the burning heart we must not only talk with Him in our prayers but we should converse with others about Him. Ninety-five

per cent of our young people are growing up without hearing a word of conversation in their homes about or with God.

"We should think of this seriously with Christmas only a few days away. Remember that the greatest Christmas present the world ever received was the gift of God in Jesus Christ."

On this same subject the bishop referred to Queen Marie's recent visit to the United States.

"If any one of you women in Lorain had been invited to accompany the queen on her special train on which there was so much concentrated domestic difficulties; I'll wager that enough derricks couldn't be found in the United States to keep the tongues of the other Lorain women on their swivels," he declared, adding a bit of humor to his address. "Yet how much have you discussed religion in the last few weeks."

And then came the church leader's plea for funds for "the church of a bleeding heart," which was responded to so generously by those in attendance.

In addition to Bishop Henderson, John Taylor Alton, Norwalk, district Methodist Episcopal superintendent was on hand for the dedication. The church choir, under the direction of W. H. Tipton, and accompanied by Mrs. A. S. Gregg, organist, and several vocalists, furnished the delightful music of the occasion which won open praise of the visiting bishop.

Pastors of all Methodist Episcopal churches of Lorain sat alongside Rev. Hess during the dedicatory services and Bishop Henderson's evening address. Visiting pastors filled their pulpits during their absence.

"Religious Education Day" is being observed Monday and will be featured by a speech by Professor Frank Whitehouse, head of the department of experimental education at Michigan state normal college."

## Parsonages

### Parsonage Number One

■ CONSIDER THE KIND of house we have provided for our pastors and their families. Were we willing to and did we make it our concern for them to have as nice a home as we could maintain for them? Are any of us frequent visitors to the parsonage now so that we may know about our church property? Were the P.K.'s as comfortable as your youngsters?

Our first parsonage is pictured for you right along side of the little brick church. It was built when the church was built and cost \$1,000. It stood on the Northwest corner of Washington and W. Main St. (W. Erie) on lot No. 110 of the original town plat. That lot was high-ground, sloping down sharply to a depression which ran along west of Washington Ave. and became deeper as it neared the lake. A natural drainage that started at Oberlin Ave. and (now) 6th St.

The parsonage was a good house for those days but when Rev. J. P. Mills came in 1883 we find in the record—"The Parsonage underwent repairs, an addition was built, the grounds were graded, a beautiful lawn started and shade trees planted which are now grown to such size that they are both useful and beautiful," from the "Green Book." The "Southwest

Corner" addition plus the other improvements and the J. P. Mills family, are shown on the photograph.

The manse was sold when the old church was torn down. Mr. A. E. Robinson, a young real estate dealer of that day, bought the property for \$1650. There had been eight pastors who had lived in it. I find that Mr. A. E. Robinson subscribed \$30.00 toward the new church. Capt. A. R. Robinson lived in the former manse after it was sold and he was interested enough to subscribe \$50.00 toward the new church. For many years Miss Kate Baumgart owned that corner property but quite a few feet of land were taken off when W. Erie was widened. One of the oil companies bought the corner when it became eligible for business and the house was moved, north on Washington and west on Fox St. (2nd). If you go down that way you will see it about halfway down the block on the north side, this time resting its sills in the partly filled up depression, the natural drainage line mentioned earlier.

For a house that is getting on for 80 years old, it looks pretty good. The trimming under the eaves, fancy wooden braces, still help hold up the style and incidentally the roof.

The quarter back side of the 1883 addition is now full back, to fit properly on a small lot.

### Parsonage Number Two

Parsonage Number 2 was a very ordinary looking structure. The lonesome parlor type. Some modern youngster will probably ask "What is a parlor?" The parlor was the "best room", and in it you put your best furniture and the family portraits. It was placed in the position it was, so that it could easily be closed off to conserve heat when necessary. If the minister's family could preserve their best things after moving them from place to place, they were lucky.

You can get a glimpse of this parsonage No. 2 by looking at the picture taken when the new brick church cornerstone was laid, on the corner of Bank (6th) and Reid St. 1892.

In the Green Book, Rev. J. Frank Smith writes that this house was on the property that he bought for a church site and that it was moved east, \$35.00, raised and a foundation put under it, \$85.00, also an addition put on, \$211.00. He also states that with funds derived from sale of old church property on Washington St. "we paid for the new (to us) parsonage and church site and had \$187.00 left to apply on the new church." Read the Green Book for complete details, if you like details.

The house had been the property of Admiral Ernest J. King's father, James King and had its share of sunshine until the church was built so close to it. It lost its glamor, if it ever had any, and I fear became a sort of step-child. Probably it kept warm, though, with so much protection. Therefore, less coal for heating and you know how some of the brothers would look at that situation. The pastor's families couldn't have been too happy in it. No outlook but a cold brick wall on one side and the neighbor's house too close on the other side. I wonder if the rain on that steep church roof didn't spatter the parsonage windows? From 1892 to 1906, seven different pastors and their families resided there. Finally the Official Board decided that we must have some thing better. There had been much sickness in the old house because of lack of sunshine and the presence of much dampness.

The house was sold and moved off the lot. Mrs. Margaret King Hurst, a cousin of Admiral King's, says that the house was moved to "Hoganville", (the long ago name for that portion of Lorain west of Oberlin Ave.) and was placed on the Northeast corner of Brownell and Chestnut (now 7th) St.. Some time later it was enlarged and modernized and is now serving time as a two-family house. What long ago interesting stories some old houses could tell.

This one doesn't show its age much.

### Parsonage Number Three

The third parsonage was on the N. W. corner of Reid Ave. and 7th St., a block away from the church. The same house, no longer a parsonage, is still there.

It had been built by Mr. Frank Floding as a home for his family. Mr. Floding was a member of our church, a druggist with a taste for real estate. He went on to build a better home for himself and persuaded the official brethren to buy the corner house.

So on March 30, 1906, Rev. E. D. Barnett and family knew that they could leave the dark and

gloomy house next to the church and come out into the light.

The "Domine", as he was affectionately called, moved down into the soul-savin'est section of Reid Ave.

The Church of the Redeemer, Episcopalian, plus its parsonage,

The Seventh St. Colored Methodist and its parsonage,

The Evangelical and Reformed Church, St. Johns, plus two bells and a parsonage,

The Roman Catholic, St. Mary's, with school, parish house and convent, opened their ever-lovin' arms and took in the Methodists. That is quite a stretch of the imagination on a creedal basis, but humanly possible.

I never heard of the five leaders of those flocks sitting down together to talk over each other's salvation, but it would have been precious in the sight of the Lord.

In 1924 it took a tornado to accomplish quite a bit of inter-mingling, this time of wood and stone and brick and sad hearts, but after helping each other repair damages and console each other on their losses, the respective religionists went along their own roads again, probably none of them any nearer finding or following the whole Truth.

This parsonage No. 3: Bought March 30, 1906; Shaken up June 28, 1924; Sold March 30, 1941.

The house had been repaired, of course, after the tornado, but the natural wear and tear of 35 years was showing.

Rev. Alva Cox's family of seven didn't seem to fit into the house very well and it really was time for us to find a better home for our pastor. Ten pastors and their families had occupied the house. Our circuit-rider habits burst forth and we moved on, leaving the other parsonages of that area to carry on.

### Parsonage Number Four

On April 17, 1941, the Official Board bought the home of Mr. Archie Peyton, superintendent of Lorain Shipyards. It was situated at 1134 6th St., opposite the old town cemetery, no longer in use. It is now a City Park. Perhaps some of our very earliest members are buried there, but few stones remain to tell the story and there is no one to say whether the spirits have risen to greet the newest parsonage.

This house is one of which we can be proud. The W.S.C.S. and the Official Board see to it that it is kept in good condition and, as if for more progress in the way of forthrightness, we are always willing to listen to the parsonage families' suggestions as to what can be done to make the house a pleasant home. Things do wear out there, even as in our own homes. Maybe the basement is flooded, maybe the plumbing is old, but we'll do our best to maintain a place of which we can be proud. One of the things this writer hopes will stay "in style" is the crystal chandelier in the dining room. It was the pride and joy of the former owner.

It has always intrigued my interest to try to find out what influence a pastoral residence has on its neighborhood, and also the pastor's family on the neighbors.



# The Church Becomes Cosmopolitan

■ IT IS IRONIC to note that the lowest point in our hundred years of church history came about two years after the completion of the little brick building erected on North Washington Ave. with such pride and at such cost in money and effort. There were several contributing causes, but the most important of these was the organization of the Congregational church in 1872. Most of the Methodists of New England stock reverted and joined the new Congregational church, and a most unhappy church quarrel at that time expedited their exodus. The result was to split the membership of our church almost in two with many of the more influential members, especially the Gillmore and Osgood families, moving over the fence to the Congregational pasture. Death also played a part. Among the influential members who had departed this world were such old standbys as Quartus Gillmore, Sr., Ebenezer Gregg, and Caleb Peachey. Shipping was still the big local industry which kept many of the men away six months of the year and masculine influence was at its lowest ebb since the original organizational meeting. It was during this period that two non-members, William C. Jones and Thomas Gawn, served as church trustees. For a time the church became a reflection of John Nichols and the minister;

The role of Nichols during this period has been strikingly characterized by one of his few enemies. The occasion was the lawsuit of 1887 where the Judge, in an effort to restrain the defamation of a man no longer here to defend himself, insisted that only Nichols' official acts as trustee be introduced in evidence. This brought the following exclamation from Atty. C. W. Johnston. "Nichols was the chief mogul down there among them as I understand it, the bell weather of this church, and took the whole load of everything. Everything he did was official from the time he got up in the morning till he retired at night!" The substance, if not the expression of it, was true; Nichols, like Atlas, carried the church on his shoulders.

The quarrel between the Congregationalists and Methodists was soon resolved, as Mrs. Lumm-Fitzgerald explained during the lawsuit, "after a real kind of warm fellowship meeting in the Methodist church—the two churches were together. Everybody shook hands with everybody and forgave them." Mrs. Fitzgerald further stated that she was not present at this meeting, but despite her one-woman holdout relations between the two churches have continued to be friendly ever since.

Meanwhile the town was growing fast. New faces came to both churches, many of them forerunners of what has since become almost a First Methodist church type. They were people who did not grow up in the town but who joined the church as families when they came, played an influential role in the Sunday School or the church organizations or the Official Board leaving their names on the record, then left town with their families and after a time the church people lost all track of them. There have been so many whose names at the centennial are

almost meaningless to the bulk of the present congregation: only a few of the oldsters recall them, and wonder where they are now. . . .

## The English Immigration

Part of the loss in membership was quickly made up by more permanent families arriving directly from England about that time. Capt. Wilford, Thomas R. Bowen, and George Wickens, Sr. all married Lorain girls from old families—indeed George Wickens married two Lorain girls from old families with an English wife between—but the others, the Watkins', the Whitehouses, the Pistells, the Goodells, the Dunstons, the Reeves, and the Heeley's all came as families with children. They were by no means all Methodists back in England but all became so after arriving in Lorain. Although the men helped to restore more masculine leadership with their vigor and youth they were definitely British in speech and thought and did not change overnight. The Whitehouse family who came in '80 and '81 were the largest group: that family included the Butlers, the Edward Smiths, and the Hayneses. The Hayneses lived in the South End and went to Simpson Chapel but the others all came to our church and being exceedingly musical quickly became prominent in church musical affairs. Indeed, Miss Jennie Smith was the first organist in the new brick church on Reid Ave. in 1893. In fact, the English newcomers helped to fill the shoes of the departed Congregationalists so ably that by 1887 three of them had become trustees of the church and were defendants in the lawsuit, namely Samuel Butler, T. R. Bowen, and George Wickens, Sr.

The rapid rise to prominence of the English newcomers gave rise to some bit of grumbling on the part of some of the older members who resented it. When Mrs. Whitehouse was elected treasurer of the Ladies Aid Society shortly after her arrival one old-timer exclaimed indignantly. "That foreign woman will never be able to understand our money!" The grumbling finally came to a head at an Official Board Meeting when one elderly member rose to his feet and voiced a complaint about "the English running the church!" He was answered by T. R. Bowen who told the complainer and the others that they were born here and couldn't help themselves but the English came here because they wanted to, and added that if the local people would take a little more interest in church affairs they wouldn't be left to the English to run. It is good to know that the complainer took the answer in good part, and it was well indeed he did for both his daughter and his grand-daughter married into the English families and one hesitates to think what his home-life would have been like if he hadn't! Following the verbal exchange at the Official Board Meeting the grumbling died away, the English were accepted, and the church history since that time has been filled with the record of their devoted service. It is hard to imagine our church without them now.

## German Stock Contributes to Our Membership

In contrast to the English immigrants who joined us as families directly on arrival, most of our

members of German stock "married into" the church and transferred from German language churches. They thus avoided much of the grumbling faced by the British in the early days by delaying their coming to us until they were American in speech and attitude. And they have been coming gradually for a long time. One of our charter members, Mrs. Chapman, was German born and by marriage and young people's groups we have acquired Brauns, Krantz, Horns, Schneiders, and Hagemans, all of whom have contributed heavily to our growth and welfare. Charles Vorwerk, the father of the six Vorwerk sisters, was one of the earlier Germans to "marry in" and one of the most devoted. His mother was a distant cousin of the poet Goethe and sent all four of her sons away to America to avoid military service in the Prussian army. Vorwerk retained his pacifist views all his life and they were not always popular in Lorain. To the best of our knowledge, he was the only Prussian among our church Germans. Except for the very early Pennsylvania German settlers, most of our German stock goes back to the Hessian revolutions of '30 and '48, and the descendants have been strongly anti-Prussian in sentiment. Many of our church people can remember the blistering remarks of Elizabeth Krantz Purcell about Hitler back in 1933 when he first won power in Germany.

One of our most faithful German associates came to us on loan from the Emmanuel Evangelical church across the street. This was Rose Klaholtz DeVeny, and her father had been the Evangelical minister there. Since her husband did not understand any German the family came to our church. Mrs. DeVeny was a devoted and faithful contributor to our church music and when they returned to the Evangelical church after English language services began in 1913 the choir certainly did miss her.

In the 1950 survey of the ethnic composition of the Official Board made as a part of the writer's doctoral study, approximately half of the members were found to have a strain of German in their ancestry. An informed guess as to the percentage of people having some German ancestry in the congregation as a whole would set the figure as high as about seventy percent.

#### Negro Contribution

Until the Seventh Street African Methodist Church was organized in 1897 the Negro families in Lorain attended the Methodist and Congregational churches. There were not many of them but they were very active members and their contribution exceeded their numbers. In our church these families included the Thompsons, the Chandlers, and the Holts. T. R. King was possibly the most mixed member we have ever had, racially speaking. He was more Indian than either Negro or white, and he married one of the Holt girls. Mrs. H. D. Root mentioned his long prayers in her paper "Praying Christians" and recalled that they invariably started, "This blessed evenin'" as it were. . . . "no matter what the time of day. The Negro women in particular left their names on the Ladies Aid record, and two little Negro girls were among those who helped to donate the first silver communion service.

When the Seventh Street church was organized

many white people urged these Negro families to remain with us, but they said then that "now there were more of" them, they "wanted to be with their own people." Much may have lain behind their simple statement and one wonders what the full story or stories really were, but the fact remains that although our church has grown increasingly cosmopolitan with the years we have never had any Negro members since.

#### Twentieth Century Immigration

The tremendous immigration of the early twentieth century in Lorain was predominately of Catholic origin although by no means exclusively, and not much absorption into our church could be expected very soon. Never-the-less there has been some and more continues. Many people have forgotten that the Rader family were Hungarian, largely because the boys became so fluent in English and grew up with us. When Albert Rader led Epworth League they used to accuse him of looking in the dictionary to pick out the longest words. Charles had a good tenor voice and sang in the choir for many years. It was he who, one bitter cold winter night at choir practice, politely gave up the seat he had been sitting in three times to late-coming tenors. When the fourth tenor appeared Charlie announced he had "warmed up" enough seats for people, and from that point on they could "warm their own!"

In the 1950 survey previously mentioned it was found that less than ten percent of the church families had been drawn from the later immigration, with the Italian at that time contributing the most. Some church people, including several ministers, have attempted to speed up this absorption by developing an interest in certain families from among the recent immigrations. Almost invariably the pattern has been the same: the people are interested and come for awhile but in the long run "don't feel at home" and drift away. Apparently such absorption cannot be forced, but it is coming gradually and showing central European origin are slowly "marrying in" to stay, and as intermarriage increases there will be more. The ethnic composition of the Official Board families in 1950 was rather interesting: it is included among the miscellanea with this history. Most recently of all, we have sponsored the Michaelides family who came to us in our centennial year direct from Greece and are now learning English in our midst. We hope they will stay long enough to "feel comfortable" among us.

#### Grace Church Contribution

The long, gradual process of turning our little family pioneer church into a big city church, begun through internal and external immigration, was accelerated by the first church merger in 1929. Of all the Methodist churches in Lorain the one that joined us in 1929, Grace Methodist Episcopal church, was the only one which our church had no share in starting. Grace church began with a Sunday School organized in South Lorain in July 1900 which met in the Macabee Hall on E. 29th St., near Pearl Ave. When the Sheffield Land Co. laid out South Lorain, land was set aside for church use. On Sunday afternoon, Nov. 24, 1901 the cornerstone for Grace Church building was laid on East 31st St. next to

Lowell School. The building was dedicated on Feb. 23, 1902.

The Grace congregation was composed mostly of Methodists from Johnston and McKeesport, Pennsylvania, who were connected with the steel industry. It was a very active and live church but as the steel people began to move downtown many of them transferred to the First Methodist or Congregational churches, and the membership of Grace began to dwindle. By 1929 less than fifty members were left and it was decided to close the church and unite with ours. The decision was made "regretfully" on their part but has proved a joy on ours.

They brought with them a bank account, and when their church building was ultimately sold to the "Assemblies of God" (it is now become the "Lorain Gospel Tabernacle" and holds some Spanish language services) the proceeds went into our building fund. Best of all, it brought into our church on one Sunday in a body forty-one of the finest Christians the church has ever received, everyone without exception a devoted and capable church worker. Their names are in the record and one can hardly name one or two without mentioning the other thirty-nine or forty. A few, D. W. Lawrence

and Frank Procter among them, have gone on to their reward, but most of them are still present and active.

### How We have Grown

In general, the growth in membership in our church has followed the population growth of the town. When we became a station church in 1875, the membership was 85. That was a drop from the original 108, but is still good considering that the membership had been almost halved only two or three years previously. In 1890 it had grown to 280. The membership has not always been counted the same way over the years; in comparing figures one must first find how the relatively inactive members are being tallied. An interesting little project for somebody might be to see whether our membership has grown proportionately with the town, but the results would hardly be valid without considering the growth in the number of churches as well. If someone wishes to go to the trouble of assembling all the data necessary for a complete picture it could easily be made into a study for an advanced degree of some sort, and the project is free for anyone wishing to use it!

—Catherine Gregg, 1956

## Baptism

■ IN EARLY LORAIN, what was more natural and convenient than to use the facilities of nature for baptism, as in Bible times?

Records show that immersion in Lake Erie was a common procedure. The service would be held some Sunday afternoon in summer. Church members on the shore sang hymns, the pastor led the person to be immersed into the lake, walking out to a reasonable depth, and then a quick, complete covering by water.

There was no curiosity manifested by those on the shore. It was the usual custom.

The Methodist Discipline reads:

"Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice of sprinkling, pouring or immersion. It is proper and desirable that this Sacrament should not only be accompanied by prayer, admonition and the reading of Scriptures, as herein provided, but that it should be administered in the presence of people and most suitably in the house of God."

Are there many of us learned enough to be able to discuss the subject of immersion with those who believe it is the only approved way?

Do "niceties and refinements" block our Spiritual vision?

Baptism symbolizes purification. Have you heard many people say that they have never been baptized?

A book entitled "Methodism" contains a chapter entitled "Methodist Worship: Practices and Ideals," written by Nolan B. Harmon, Jr. He tells of the abridgement of the Church of England Prayer Book by John Wesley, for use by the Methodist Society. Reading these things helps us to realize how our top church men do struggle with the changes that seem to lead to improvement and better understanding of the several church offices. The chapter-writer asks, "Did he (Wesley) think that baptism was the gate to the church and that only?"

Anna and Carrie Vorwerk of the early C. S. Vorwerk family of our church, were among those who chose to be immersed in the lake.

There are two Baptismal Fonts in our church. The one in the Sanctuary at the west end of the Chancel was the gift of the Cradle Roll Dept. of the Sunday School when it was in charge of Mrs. Vernon Tippet, mother of Mrs. Rehyma Tippet Burge.

The second Font is in Dodge Memorial Chapel. It was the gift of Mr. Rowe Little and family in memory of Mr. and Mrs. W. N. Little and Miss Noreen Little.

Do you have a record of your baptism?

Is it important to you?

Have you, if you are parents, followed through faithfully on your commitment given when your children were blessed and given a name in the church of your choice?





**REV. MILLS AND FAMILY  
IN FRONT OF OLD  
METHODIST PARSONAGE**

Northwest Corner of W. Erie  
and Washington Ave.  
Sometime in 1880's.

Note "Freeway," W. Main St., now  
W. Erie Ave., looks rather primitive.

**METHODIST SLEIGH RIDE**

Went in two parties and this party's sleigh turned over, so they all came back and had their pictures taken. The other sleigh reached its destination.

Back Row: Mrs. Ed Smith, Mrs. Chapman, Mrs. Sam Butler, Burt Nichols.

Second Row: T. R. Bowen, Phoebe Sutliff, Mrs. John Pierce, Georgiana Reid, Mr. and Mrs. C. B. Chapman.

Front Row: Cora Wilford, Joseph Didero, Photographer, Anna Vorwerk, Emma Vorwerk.



**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS  
1910**

First Row, L. to R.: Raymond Nichols, Carl Kishman, Ralph Bartholomew, Mr. Radey, Frank Ayres (teacher), Frank Ramser, Ellsworth Sabin.

Second Row, L. to R.: Willis Gove, Richard Fauver, Frank Gilbert, Wm. MacPherson, Lewis Helt, Charles Rader, Forrest Carver, LeRoy Mills, Henry McHenry, Wilford Bartenfeld.



**MISS ELIZABETH  
TRISTRAM'S  
SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS  
CIRCA 1900**

Top Row, L to R: Leola Sheridan,  
Mary Lyons, Ola Braun, Edith Little.  
Middle Row, L to R: Margaret  
King, Edna Whitehouse, Carol Thew,  
Laura Jaycox, Maude Pierce, Fern  
Stewart, Gertrude Reamer.

Bottom Row, L to R: Lou Garver,  
Harriet Davidson, Kate Utterback,  
Lou Braun, Hattie Green.



**WOMENLESS WEDDING  
1925**

Top Row, L to R: George Greenwood, Alfred Sharp, Percy Scisco, Unknown, Unknown, H. H. Neptune, C. E. Doane, Samuel Wire, LeRoy Mills, Frank Ayres, Richard Fauver, H. E. Hageman, Eugene Goodrich.

Middle Row, L to R: George Anthony, M. H. Romoser, M. N. Eldred, C. S. Kelser, J. C. Standen, Custer Snyder, C. P. Dodge, W. W. Whitehouse, V. E. Tippett.

Bottom Row, L to R: W. H. Hamilton, R. C. Hicock, H. I. Scott, Charles Cleveland.

**YE OLD FOLKS CONCERT FIRST M. E. CHURCH CHOIR MARCH 13, 1936**

Top Row, L to R: Jimmy Black-  
ann, Bob McGill, Chas. Bartenfeld,  
Frederick Johnson, Earl Pietch.

Second Row, L to R: Alice Janette  
Smith, Gordon Garber, Glenn Hawley,  
Leo Allwine, Raymond Curtis, John  
Humphrey, Howard Radabaugh, Clif-  
ford Buda, Richard Creamer, M. N.  
Eldred.

Third Row, L to R: Mary Van-  
Sickel, Jean Mills, Marie Gray, Miss  
Roehr, Edna Ayres, Evelyn Mills,  
Caroline Procter, Mrs. Warren Pape,  
Mrs. Vera V. Luttrell, Marie Blackann.

Fourth Row, L to R: Rachel Mc-  
Caskey, Irma Askew, Dorothy Wor-  
cester, Dorothy Sabins, S. Norman  
Park, Alice Peasegood, Phyllis Mills,  
Phyllis Burke, Stella Wickens, Mar-  
cella Smith.

Front Row, L to R: Joan Luttrell,  
Phyllis Luttrell, Janice VanSickel,  
Phyllis Procter.





LITTLE BRICK CHURCH — 1872



SECOND BRICK CHURCH

Built in 1892, destroyed by tornado in 1924.



TEMPORARY CHURCH — 1891

This building stood on the south side of W. Erie Ave., near Wickens Place.

The first floor was occupied by Geo. Wickens Furniture Store.

The second floor was called Bowen's Hall, where First Methodist Church held services while old brick church was torn down and new brick church was being built on corner of Bank St. (6th St.) and Reid Ave.

Third floor was for living quarters.

Notice initials I.O.O.F. in the gable, Independent Order of Odd Fellows met here.

Mr. T. R. Bowen owned the building.



INTERIOR AFTER TORNADO — 1924



EXTERIOR AFTER TORNADO — 1924

LAYING CORNERSTONE  
1892

First Methodist Episcopal Church  
Corner Bank and Reid Ave.

House next to church used  
as parsonage.



RESETTING CORNERSTONE  
of First Methodist Church, de-  
stroyed in the tornado of 1924,  
into the northwest corner of  
the new church at 6th St. and Reid  
Ave.

Appearing in the picture, left to  
right, are Mr. Harry Naylor, Mr.  
Samuel Butler, Mr. Fred Pierce, Mrs.  
W. W. Whitehouse, Mr. W. W.  
Whitehouse, Mr. Edward Smith, Mr.  
Thomas R. Bowen.



PRESENT FIRST METHODIST CHURCH — BUILT IN 1926





#### BEREAN SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS — 1945

First Row, L. to R.: Mrs. Ida Martin, Mrs. Hughes, Mrs. Smathers, Mrs. Earl Herron.

Second Row, L. to R.: Mrs. Rose Longwell, Mrs. Mary Whitehouse (teacher), Mrs. Ella Alexander, Mrs. Geo. Mowery, Mrs. Cora Bartenfeld, Mrs. Jennie Dodge, Mrs. Schwan, Mrs. J. J. Ewers, Mrs. Frank Clair, Mrs. Anna Chapman, Mrs. S. S. Cox, Mrs. Rose Homen.

#### BROTHERHOOD CLASS 1927 - 1928

Front Row, L. to R.: Harry Naylor, Chas. Bartenfeld, Chas. Dodge, Elmore Richards, John Ewers, Chas. Hartz, A. S. Gregg, James Dutton, Carlin Doane.

Back Row, L. to R.: Chas. Smith, Mr. Adams, Conde Doane, Frank Ayres, Rev. J. H. Smith, Rev. Elmer Smith, Custer Snyder, Ben Meachem, John Fisher, Fred Johnson, Alan Thurston, C. E. McIlvane, Mr. Adams, Clayton Standen, Unknown, Chas. Tope, Ezra Waugh, Floyd Moulton.



#### LORAIN'S "FIRST" M. E. CHURCH — 1872

From a pencil sketch by Geo. B. Wickens in 1891. The figure of the man leading a cow to the street from "City Hall Place" is his brother, William, who died in 1905. The building at the far left is the church parsonage. The house nearest the man and cow is the old Wickens home. An enlarged copy of his picture now hangs in Walter Frey's Funeral Home.

# Communion

■ A BORROWED PHRASE, "ascending scale," referring to our progress in mode of worship, could no doubt be applied to our manner of observance of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Can you visualize the Communion services in the early church? One cup was used by all the participants. The minister in charge carrying a linen napkin in his hand to wipe the cup as it was passed on from one person to another. I have heard people say that they "just couldn't" partake of Communion that way. The Church must have wrestled a long time before giving up the Biblical way. Now, for health measures, we are privileged to have individual cups.

The first Communion set used in the little old church consisted of a plain, white china pitcher and two glass goblets.

The story is told of the young girls in that early church forming a Juvenile Society which met on Saturday afternoons — no refreshments. They cut quilt patches, raiding mother's "piece" bag for materials, then made quilt blocks and sold them. The girls worked a long time but finally had enough money — \$25.00 reported — to buy a Silver Communion Service, consisting of a pitcher and two gold lined cups. They also bought a baptismal bowl and a linen cloth for the Communion table.

The town silverware and jewelry merchant, Mr. George Clark, must surely have been generous to have sold so much for so little money. Being a member of the church they showed their good will.

The white linen cloth, not ready-made then, surely, had to be hemmed, maybe threads drawn first, and

we wonder who the kind merchant was who sold them the cloth. Perhaps S. L. Burgett who lived next door to the little brick church and operated a dry goods store.

The names of the girls we do know Nettie Root (Mrs. Walter Goodell, mother of Bessie Healy and Lewis Goodell), Ollie Showalter and Jessie Showalter (sisters of Mrs. Blanche Gemeiner), Emma Vorwerk (Mrs. Kochenderfer), Anna Vorwerk (now one of our oldest members, 1956), Georgie Reid (Mrs. Ed. Lane), Kittie Cowley (Mrs. Sam Wire), Cora Wilford (Mrs. Chas. Bartenfeld), Alice Holt (Mrs. Robinson), Ella Thompson (Mrs. Moore), Ella Bowers, Laura Watkins (Mrs. F. A. Rowley). Two of the above number were Negro girls. There were several Negro families who belonged to our church.

All but one of those girls have passed on.

It is said that the silver baptismal bowl is in the safe at First Church now. I have seen the bowl but it has no marking on it to indicate time of purchase, etc.

Have you ever given a thought to the Communion Steward who prepares the elements used for our Lord's Supper? It is a task that should be lovingly performed. We believe that to be true when we consider that Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Hurst performed that service for 39 years. Mrs. Betty Wood Barnes is now faithful to that office.

The book, "The Silver Chalice," would interest you. Learn the importance of the ownership of that first Communion Cup. The chalice (ancient name) is the attribute of St. John the Baptist.

## Women's Foreign Missionary Society

■ THE WOMEN'S FOREIGN Missionary Society was more than a local organization. The church at large had long sponsored such groups, following the Biblical command, "Go ye into all the world . . ." Women believed that there were many phases of the necessary work where women missionaries were more acceptable than men. The W.F.M.S. at home supported with money and material things many strong women who felt called to go to the foreign field. These women opened up a new life for the women of many countries, by establishing schools and hospitals. Who among you can remember the Missionary Barrels sent to foreign lands? Those barrels probably held many things impractical for use in heathen countries. The Missionary who received such things could only pray that the women back home would come to realize the real needs. Do you recall the times when some of these missionaries on leave would come to speak for one of our services? Their stories were long and we became restless. Their faces were long, too, burdened with the seriousness of the facts they presented.

The local society was given an opportunity every year to take over one church service and receive the collection for the society work. Our home loyalty was put to a severe test many times. Many were not in sympathy with the foreign work.

Elsewhere in this history the statement was made that the women who carried the torch for the Foreign Society were usually the older ones. "Certain age" groups just do set themselves or are set apart often times.

The W.F.M.S. sponsored two groups of the younger women and girls.

In 1924 we still find the "Young Women's Foreign Missionary Society" which was made up principally of school teachers who were not free to attend the afternoon sessions of the older group. Miss Helen Mills, a Lorain High School teacher, was listed as president that year (1924).

Then there were the "Standard Bearers," a bit younger, high school girls perhaps. In 1924 Miss Barbara Stewart was president.

A still younger group, "The King's Heralds," was guided by Mrs. C. B. Hess, the wife of the minister at that time.

In the foreign field our church has been proud of the work of Bishop Ralph Ward. His chosen field was China. The story of his devotion and service is long and full of evidence that he really felt called to his work and loved the people of China. He suffered with them and bore the burden of being imprisoned for his loyalty to the church.

Bishop Ward spent some of his boyhood in Lorain.

His father, F. D. Ward, was superintendent of our public schools for 15 years. His mother was a teacher in the Sunday School and one of the women who gave her time to help organize the East Side Sunday School, which later grew to be Gawn Ave. Church, now Delaware Ave. There were four Ward boys, Ralph, Gleason, Grant and Lucius.

Another Lorain boy who entered Foreign Missionary work was John Irish, whose home was on W. 8th St., near Brownell Ave. John was a member of our Sunday School but he seemed to stand alone in his family as far as service to our church was concerned. Much credit is due him to think that, under those circumstances, he was strong enough in his conviction concerning Christianity to give his life to the Church. He served in China.

In the general reorganization of the church, this society, W.F.M.S., was incorporated into the new look of the church at large. Now foreign studies are conducted in and funds collected from the Women's Society of Christian Service, W.S.C.S.

Again it would be wonderful to be able to list the names of all the faithful women who sang "*From Greenland's icy mountains, From India's coral strand,*" with full belief in their idea of foreign missions. Space will not permit.

Now the approach to the "icy mountains" and the "coral strand" must be from a different angle. That hymn is not even in our hymn book any more.

Reginald Heber, author of the words, was Bishop of Calcutta, 1823, sent from England.

Writing of India reminds me that we were privileged to have in our church Rev. Ira A. Richards and family who had been missionaries in India. Rev. Richards went out as a missionary in 1879 and Ellen

Cornelia Smith went in 1880. These two people had met at Baldwin-Wallace College in Berea. They were married in India and some of the Richards children were born there. Because of Rev. Richards' health they returned to the United States but after a furlough went to India again. The family came to Lorain in 1900 and the children were regular attendants of our Sunday School. Mrs. C. E. Van Deusen is the only one in Lorain now. She has always been an ardent worker for foreign missions.

A year book of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of this church states that we celebrated the Golden Jubilee year in 1919. That sets the founding date as 1869, a few years preceding that of the Home Missionary Society.

The "Mite" Boxes of the Foreign Missionary Society became the "mighty" boxes for they brought considerable sums to help further the work around the world. The society pledged itself to support Bible women under the direction of the missionaries in many lands. They were native women who were often more favorably received by other natives than were the white missionaries.

Scholarships were awarded to those young people of Asia, Africa and South America who showed promise of being able to carry on the church's work for the welfare of their people. Many such young people came to U.S.A. for education in medicine, etc.

Our church magazines are full of accounts of the progress of these people. The same Mrs. Henry Pfeiffer mentioned in the Home Missions article, is found in a story of a Methodist Medical missionary to Bolivia, South America, in September, 1956, Reader's Digest. We hope you read it and were proud to think that your "Mite" Box, plus much, much more, had helped the great cause of Missions.

## Women's Home Missionary Society

■ THE WOMAN'S HOME Missionary Society, as its name indicates, confined its work to the Home Field within the United States and its territories. The members supported schools, hospitals and deaconess work in the less favored districts of large cities, in backward rural areas and mountain districts, in Indian reservations and Negro sections.

In any church group you could usually raise an argument as to the respective merits of home and foreign work. A strictly Home Missionary lady would sit and listen to a returned Foreign Missionary, but would sooner or later burst forth with, "Yes, but why worry so much about the heathen, when you have misery right here on your own doorstep?"

A glance at a Home Missionary Yearbook of 1930, shows that the society was celebrating the golden anniversary, which would indicate the year 1880 as the founding year. Other yearbooks show these topics, among many, for discussion: Trend of the Races, Barriers Between Neighbors, Racial Understanding, Home Missions and Prejudice, The Slave in America, The Orientals in America.

Some of our women belonged to both Missionary Societies, which meant two sets of dues and twice the number of meetings each month. They were proving that their hearts were big enough to see the need for

all missionary work. It seemed such a fine way of leveling off when finally all women's activities were merged into the Women's Society of Christian Service.

In this era of being able to travel about so easily, all the world is really our neighbor. Many of those whom we term foreign are here with us, aiming to be our home folks. However, there is still plenty left "over there" and our W.S.C.S. aims to give assistance everywhere possible.

There have been two women brought up in our church who were attracted to Home Missionary work.

Miss Ethel Chapin, who had been an enthusiastic Sunday School pupil and a tireless Epworth League worker, was for nine years superintendent of Mitchell Home in Meisenheimer, North Carolina. Previous to that she had taught in Boylan Home, Jacksonville, Florida, and Harwood Home in Albuquerque, New Mexico. All of these were under the jurisdiction of the general Home Missionary Society.

Miss Chapin told of the two disastrous fires that came upon Mitchell Home after it was moved down out of the mountains. The second fire occurred at the end of her first year there and some of those in charge of the home felt that too many odds were against them. They wanted to abandon the school. Miss Chapin's enthusiasm for the work of Home Missions gave her



the conviction that the Home should be rebuilt and she so persuaded those in power.

Mitchell Home finally became an accredited high school and later, with help from Mrs. Henry Pfeiffer of the Hudnut family, a wealthy woman who used her money well, the Home became a junior college with one of the finest physical plants in the south.

All of these homes mentioned were carried on through the self help plan and every pupil worked his way. Only those who have been close to that kind of school can give you the story of the wonderful results accomplished and the thankful hearts made among those young folks fortunate enough to attend such schools.

Miss Ethel Chapin is now Mrs. Charles Morgan. She returned to Lorain a year or so ago to make her home.

Miss Evelyn Weaver, another daughter of the church, has written for us an account of her decision to become a deaconess of the Methodist Church. Her paper is part of our historical data and will appear in this series of articles. She is now in Pakistan.

At one time a deaconess wore a distinguishing costume, a plain black dress with small white collar and cuff trimming and a small black bonnet with wide white ties. This style of dress made it easy for people to recognize her as a church worker doing missionary work, and it was thought that she would be safe in some of the districts of the city where she might otherwise be in danger. Most every class of people respects such a worker. The wearing of that costume was dropped some years ago and a deaconess may now dress as she chooses.

The Home Missionary Society sponsored three young groups:

The Queen Esther organization was privileged to have, in 1924, Miss LaVerne Stone (Mrs. Harry Snyder) as president. Several members of the Stone family have been valued workers in our church. The mother, Mrs. Tyna Stone, gave a great deal of time and thought to our church. Mr. John Stone, LaVerne's brother, and his family, also give freely of their time.

## Young People's Organizations

■ THE NAME "CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR" appears to be the first one used for the Youth Group organization of our church. A letter from Mrs. C. F. Bartenfeld (Cora Wilford) states that when it was suggested that the Methodists use the name "Epworth League," there was much discussion and dissatisfaction. Isn't that the usual procedure when changes seem about to happen?

The name "Epworth" has a distinct meaning and significance in Methodism. It was in Epworth, England, that John Wesley was born.

There had been six different young people's societies throughout Methodism, with as many different names. It seemed best to combine the plans of those societies under one head. That union was accomplished in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1889 and the name "Epworth League" chosen, and the motto, "Look Up and Lift Up," seemed most fitting as a guide.

The Home Guards and Mother's Jewels were presided over by Mrs. E. M. Love. She has stated that one of her special concerns was to teach these children to pray aloud and to learn many Bible verses. She tells some cute stories about these experiences with the younger set. Mrs. Love gave of her time and talent to District and Conference work as well as locally. She was the first president of the W.S.C.S. after the reorganization.

An interesting Home Missionary who spent his last years in the Lorain church was Rev. John H. Pitezel. He lived with his daughter, Mrs. Carrie Painter, the wife of one of our former pastors who also came to Lorain to spend his remaining years. Lorain must be a nice place!

The book "Lake Superior" gives considerable space to the work of Rev. Pitezel both among the Indians and the miners. The author of the book, Grace Lee Nute, gives over one chapter of this book to "Carriers of the Cross" and says that the literary remains of these devoted explorers are enormous and fascinating. Rev. Pitezel began his work in 1843. His diaries are in the Carnegie Public Library at the Sault. He died May 4, 1906, during the pastorate of Rev. E. D. Barnett.

The Goodwill Industries, a national project, was started under the auspices of the Methodist Church. The Methodist ministers in any city in which Goodwill Industries is set up, are automatically on the board of directors and many of our Methodist women also serve. It is really a missionary project of the church but has become a Civic responsibility also.

Mrs. Marjorie Willis Wright, the very able director of Goodwill, is the daughter of Mr. Vernie Willis, who was an enthusiastic worker in our church.

Miss Sina Evans, the director of Neighborhood House at South Lorain, is a member of First Church. Two of her assistants, Miss Mildred Bond and Mrs. Hattie Green Salisbury are also Methodists. Mrs. Salisbury was a long-ago faithful member of our Sunday School.

And so the missionary work continues.

The Lorain group adopted the new name on Aug. 27, 1889, with 77 members enrolled. Rev. Robert McCaskey was pastor at that time.

A very old book in possession of the Historical committee gives the Constitution and the By-laws of the early "Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of the Methodist Church of Lorain, Ohio." The requisites for membership seem to us as very exacting. Have we lost that necessary something?

There have been many pages cut from this old record book. Of course, we wonder why. There are several lists of names of members.

Toward the end of the book we find the Constitution and By-laws of the newer "Epworth League of the M. E. Church of Lorain, Lorain County, Ohio." Here the date is given Aug. 20 instead of 27. A week can get out of hand just like that.

I would like to pass on to you "Article II—Object,"

because you are going to forget to ask the committee to loan the book to you so you can read and digest everything in it. This quotation is worth your time now:

"The object of this organization is to promote an earnest, intelligent, practical and loyal piety in the young members and friends of the church, to aid them in constant growth in grace and in the attainment of purity of heart." Think on these things.

There is a priceless enclosure in this book, written by Elizabeth Wallace Wickens, May 17, 1914, on the occasion of the League's 25th (Cleveland) Anniversary. It give the names of about thirty people who were charter members. About five of them are still with us (1956). They are Anna Vorwerk, Rusha Reid (Fauver), James Lyons Bowen, Bert Nichols (J. B.), Arthur Pierce (Elyria).

She writes of meetings on Tuesday evenings, a devotional service, "witnessing for the Master," she puts it.

Quote: "We all did our part to make the meetings helpful and no time was lost waiting for one another, though some of us stammered a good deal in witnessing for the Master."

Besides this prayer meeting, a social was held once a month in homes of members.

The mark of the Methodists, "Take a collection," was a part of these social affairs too. The League pledged \$500 toward a new church (1892) and these collections paid some of the pledge. Elizabeth Wallace (Mrs. Geo. Wickens, Sr.) was the first president. In her account of the League she writes that there were six departments: Spiritual, Mercy and Help, Literary, Social, Correspondence, and Finance.

It looks as tho every member could have work in at least one department.

These six departments were later cut to four: Spiritual, World Evangelism, Social Service, and Recreation and Culture.

The writer can witness that these "Sociables" were definitely something to attract the young people of the church. In 1901 Horace Whitehouse bought and used a book put out by the Ladies' Home Journal Religious Library, entitled "Church Sociables and Entertainments," showing new ways to raise funds. The ideas it contains are still good.

In April, 1893, our brand new church was proudly exhibited to the Epworth Leagues of Cleveland District. A copy of the convention program given at that time is in our files. There was a great deal of music on this program, showing that Lorain Church had much talent. Everything about the convention gave evidence that somebody "had a concern" for our young folks even as today (1956).

The Lorain Epworth League finally decided to have their meetings on Sunday evenings instead of Tuesdays. They met just before the regular church service. We didn't all stay for that service because there were many "two-some" walks to take.

A recently found bulletin of 44 years ago, called "The Silent Helper," listed two chapters of the Epworth League: Simpson Chapter, President Fred Johnson, Secretary Fern Stewart, Treasurer Willard Loughry; Wesley Chapter, President Lewis Goodell, Secretary Scott Lyons, Treasurer Harvey Hurst.

My recollection is that the testimony part of the

meeting proved more and more difficult to carry out. Something happened to our feelings on personal testimony. Our growing sophistication overpowered our former desire to testify.

We were no longer "strangely warmed" as was John Wesley. Many leaders turned to giving us opportunity for questioning and argument, exchange of ideas on things pertaining to Christian living.

In the early 1900's we had a pretty regular visitor at League meetings in the person of an elderly colored man who styled himself "Brother John." He always had a testimony to give concerning his week's experiences and the way God worked in those experiences. The testimonies varied but he always closed with these words, "I LOVE all you young folks! 'Membah me within youah prayahs, that I may prove faithful and when I se done with this unfriendly world, I SHALL inherit the Kingdom." He wept happy tears each time and always had his clean white handkerchief ready to wipe them away. John was good for us. We often wished we could have and could express the same apparent faith that he possessed.

Again, many names of the faithful must be put in the files.

The Epworth League was automatically disbanded in 1939 when the reorganization plan of the Methodist Church took place.

The new name for youth groups was Methodist Youth Fellowship, M.Y.F.

The president of our Youth Council, Miss Marjory Burke, came before the Official Board and presented a project of our youth for a Chapel to be built in a room of the church suitable for that purpose. This led to the establishing of Dodge Chapel. A complete story of that will be found elsewhere in our History.

Miss Burke, the daughter and grand daughter of former Grace Church members, was a very efficient young lady and served well in many organizations of the church. Her musical ability was outstanding. Her parents are Mr. and Mrs. Robert Burke, her grandparents, Rev. and Mrs. J. H. Smith. Miss Burke is now Mrs. Carter Clark. She and her sister, Phyllis (Mrs. John Blocker), worked faithfully.

The M.Y.F. groups have never been very large—why didn't Methodists have more children?—but they are loyal and tireless in working on projects for the church.

Our former deaconess, Miss Bogardus, and later our young assistant pastors, have been the advisors of these groups.

Under the efficient leadership of Marion Heeley (Smith) and Emily Heinrich the M.Y.F. Juniors made a fine Christmas Creche for the Sanctuary. The Senior M.Y.F. made a Christmas Frieze for the Mary-Martha room. These were both formally presented to the church at one of our Sunday morning services.

Our young people have earned many a dollar to help pay their way for a week's conference of young Methodists in Lakeside. This is a yearly affair.

At one time they had a series of visits to other churches to learn first hand about other denominations. One in particular should be noted, the visit to the Jewish Synagogue where the rabbi explained the Jewish belief in brief form and explained the symbolism used.



The groups of young people from several churches in Lorain occasionally have joint devotional and recreational get-togethers. With fine leadership this should prove to be challenging.

A Junior League was formed for the very young children in 1890 while we were still using the little brick church.

Mrs. J. F. Smith, the wife of the pastor at that time, was the organizer. She acted as its president and conducted devotional meetings. The League met on Sunday afternoons and there were no movies in

existence to detract.

The children studied the Bible, and were trained to speak and pray without embarrassment. They carried bouquets to the sick and looked up new members. They gathered \$175 in due time with the definite object in view of purchasing a bell for the new church. The old bell had cracked and was of no use but a new one was never purchased.

The four daughters of Rev. and Mrs. Smith, Ruth, Francis, Jeanette and Martha were kept busy with church organizations.

## The "Mite" Society

■ THE MEMBERS OF the "Mite" Society of a hundred years ago would, no doubt, be over-awed by the lengthy title, "The Women's Society of Christian Service," which we use today.

The working sisters of 1856 with their floor-sweeping skirts, tight bodices and long sleeves didn't have a kitchen in the church, but even with that handicap, the famous 10c Friday night suppers that they served were really something to remember.

Food for these suppers was cooked in the several homes of the committees and brought to the church. Can you picture some of the good sisters making their way churchward with their heavy baskets? Perhaps one generous lady who owned a horse and buggy collected these things. There's no one left to tell us about it.

When the food arrived at the church it was kept warm on a small gasoline stove—maybe with an oven on top. Think of the fresh home-made bread with golden-brown crust, some home-made pickles and a serving of oven-baked beans, with molasses and salt-pork seasoning, baked all day in the wood-fed stove or in a fireplace! Then a cup or two of tea or maybe coffee. Altogether it sounds like a good 10 cents' worth.

Perhaps they were having an oyster supper for a change, with oysters scalloped or in a stew and with milk direct from cow to church, without benefit of pasteurization, just plain pasture. The only things strange to the local scene were the oysters. How and where did they get them?

To make room for the tables on which to serve these 10c suppers, some of the pews in the rear of the church were moved. I wonder if they had folding tables? I hope that the little old gasoline stove was in a safe spot. Fire regulations? Well, perhaps a few, but if anything did happen the fire bell was handy, because the church bell was used for a fire warning too. What about water supply to put out the fire?

If the "Mite" Society didn't exactly fill the little tin box with quiet money, it did promote the social life of the church and think of the news you could pick up when the "girls" got together. If the women had not had "a concern" as well as a social urge, much of good import would have been lost.

Things must have been progressing when the "Mite" Society became the Ladies' Aid Society. The name sounds as though the women thought that their organization had reached a higher plane and the "Mites" should be replaced by actual dollars and that the good that money can do could be spread over more ground.

But the "mites" didn't go out of style completely. They never do.

Further progress was made evident when the women decided that they could also support a Foreign Missionary Society and later, a Home Missionary Society. Then it was that a bit of rivalry was born. It always seemed strange to me that the younger women of the church had the notion that the Foreign society was mostly for older women. The Home society spelled vigorous youth and newer ideas. Perhaps because of that diversity of thought, the church at large decided on a general reorganization of women's activities and so came into being "The Women's Society of Christian Service," the alphabetical W.S.C.S. The alphabet has come into its own, at least in part.

I remember how carefully and critically we listened to the new plans when they were presented. There was much shaking of heads. However, there could be no going backward, so we used the wisdom with which we were endowed and prayed and planned and went to work to make the reorganization an effective program of progress.

What a host of names of efficient women appear in our church groups over the past one hundred years. It is pleasant to share with you, our readers, the little "homey" glimpses of some of these women who gave of their best to the church. First to record the following account of a dinner honoring past presidents of the Ladies' Aid Society. Then will follow sketches of some of them.

### Dinner Honoring Past Presidents of the Ladies' Aid Society

Wednesday, March 2, 1932

On Wednesday, March 2, 1932, about 60 ladies, members of the Ladies' Aid Society of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, gathered in the dining room of the church for a tureen dinner, honoring Mrs. Fannie Wilford on her 86th birthday, which was March 1, and the past presidents of the society. Rev. H. W. Courtney, pastor was chairman of the day. After a bounteous dinner a fine program was enjoyed by those present.

Mrs. A. S. Gregg led in the singing of Annie Laurie and Old Folks at Home. The chairman then introduced the past presidents who were present as follows and each one responded with some remarks and reports of the years they were president: Mrs. Fannie Wilford, Mrs. W. W. Whitehouse, Mrs. Elizabeth Smith, Mrs. Samuel Butler, Mrs. Elmore Richards, Mrs. N. B. Hurst, Mrs. E. R. Herren, Mrs. O. N. Mowery, Mrs.

Fred Miller, Mrs. Charles Tope, Mrs. C. S. Kelsner, Mrs. H. H. Adams and Mrs. E. R. Herren. Mrs. Herren was the only one having the honor to be elected to this office twice, having served from 1920 to 1922 and again to be elected in 1931. Mrs. Samuel Butler and her daughter, Mrs. Fred Miller, were the only mother and daughter to serve as presidents of the society.

The names of the deceased presidents were then called as follows: Mrs. H. D. Root, Mrs. Margaret Bradford, Mrs. Celia E. Cowley, Mrs. F. M. Noxon, Mrs. George Wickens and Mrs. W. L. Hughes. All stood in silent prayer in memory of the services of these. Many very interesting incidents were recalled by those present. Miss Grace Vorwerk read several incidents copied from the local newspapers from the years of 1880 to 1890. These were thoroughly enjoyed by all present.

This was the first occasion of the kind to be held in First Church and all felt that it should be an annual occasion. A beautiful rose was presented to each past president by the society. At present there are about 350 ladies in the Ladies' Aid Society divided into ten circles with Mrs. E. R. Herren as president, Mrs. C. P. Dodge, vice-president, Mrs. Geo. Greenwood, secretary, and Mrs. Charles Smith as treasurer. Mrs. Charles Smith has been treasurer for the last ten years.

The Ladies' Aid Society has almost completed the payment of the third \$10,000.00 on the building fund for the new church. And last year they assumed another \$10,000. When this is completed, they will have paid \$40,000 toward the building fund of the new church. Also they furnished the Ladies' Parlor, under the supervision of Mrs. C. W. Purcell, at a cost of \$1,600. The pipe organ for the new church cost \$10,000 which was paid by the Ladies' Aid.

During the year of 1931 and 193, when the long-to-be-remembered depression was on, the Ladies' Aid turned all the money they earned into the current expense budget. They paid over \$950 before the New Year of 1932 and then paid off a note of \$900 at the bank which had accumulated in the current expenses. For several years they served noon-day lunches in the church every Thursday, except during the months of June, July, August and September.

Mrs. H. D. Root (Jeanette Fuller) is mentioned as among the first presidents of the "Mite" Society. Both she and her husband gave many years of service in all branches of the church and now we find some of their descendants, grand-children, great grand-children and great great grand-children, helping to carry on the work of the church. Two great grand-daughters, Mrs. Margaret Healey Benson and Mrs. Marion Healy Smith, are active in leadership in our present day W.S.C.S. They have a goodly heritage in faithfulness to a worthy cause.

Mrs. Root penned an excellent defense for "Praying Christians," when some one remarked that there was not a Christian in town to pray with a dying man. The paper was written in 1878. Later, Mrs. Root's daughter, Nettie Root Goodell, added to her mother's theme. These writings are being put into our church record.

An article from the Lorain Times of 1883 is headed "May Festival Was Failure." This was attributed to Mrs. Root's illness so that she could not carry out her

elaborate plans. Where, oh where were the other good sisters? Anyway, the paper says, "The ladies made about \$100." Mrs. Root's sister, Mrs. Burton, was also an active member of the society. We hear of her again in the story of the church bell.

These miscellaneous items found in old newspapers give evidence that the ladies had a good publicity chairman:

March 14, 1883: "The ladies of the M. E. Mite Society cleared \$36 at the maple sugar and mush and milk party last Friday evening. They have discovered that the way to the average Lorainite's pocketbook is via his stomach."

The Herald—1892: "The bravest woman in town," observed the Herald in connection with plans for a Methodist bazaar, "is Mrs. F. B. Vernam, who is to have charge of the baby show. After the show she will have to have a body guard to protect her from disappointed mothers."

The Herald—1892: "It's a Hummer!" The Herald reported that the bazaar newly changed to "bazaar" from "Methodist fair," as it had been termed earlier, was going to be a "hummer." A feature of the Art booth was brick out of the old church, each bearing a hand-painted picture of the church before it was torn down. These were to be used for door stops. Ted Wickens used to tell how he and some of the other boys were given the job of cleaning the cement off the brick, so that they could be made useful. If not cleaned enough for the painted picture, then they were neatly covered with pieces of carpet and also sold as door stops.

Mrs. Margaret Bradford, an early president, belonged to another of the families that came to Lorain with the railroad (old C. L. & W.). Besides her husband and son, there were Mr. B. N. Utterback and his three children, Mrs. Bradley's relatives, who made up the household. Mr. Utterback was a conductor on one of the passenger trains. His three children were Lucy, Kate and Charles. Kate became Mrs. Frank Clark, daughter-in-law of Mrs. Geo. Clark, now (1976) one of our oldest church members. We lost Mrs. Bradford along the way, somehow. One of her "Ladies' Aid" efficient helpers was Mrs. F. W. McIlvane. The families were neighbors on 2nd Ave. (now 9th St.). Mr. McIlvane was also a member of the crew on one of the C. L. & W. passenger trains. Where, oh where, are those trains now?

Mrs. Celia Cowley belonged to the family of one of the very earliest settlers of Black River, the Lyoneses. Most of the Lyons family were tall, stately persons to whom most people were attracted. Mrs. Cowley followed that family pattern. A merry crinkle of wrinkles about her eyes gave evidence of a sense of humor. I notice her middle initial is "E." That must have stood for efficiency. Numerous items concerning this family are found elsewhere in this History.

The family of Atty. and Mrs. W. L. Hughes came to Lorain from Cadiz, Ohio, attracted by the story of the town's growth. As president of the Ladies' Aid, Mrs. Hughes must have managed to plan her busy life well. Beside her husband and two daughters she had the care of two elderly people in her home. Mrs. Hughes was a sweet, motherly woman, the personification of patience. She used her practical mind to further the business of the church. The rest of her

family gave of their musical talent. Atty. Hughes with his flute and leading of Sunday School singing, and the girls with the piano. Izzetta Hughes Jones has been recognized in the many cities in which she has lived as an excellent pianist and accompanist. Together with her husband, Harry Jones, who is a cellist, they have enjoyed a life full of music. Inez Hughes Gardner also had a natural musical talent.

Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Noxon and daughter, Daisy, came to Lorain from Uhrichville, Ohio, "down the road" on the C. L. & W. railroad. Mrs. Noxon was a bustling little lady who put much of her energy to work for the Ladies' Aid Society of the Methodist Church eventually becoming its president. Her attendance at church service was limited because of young children at home. One Sunday she left Mr. Noxon to look after them while she went to church and on returning home learned that father hadn't done too well, so she decided that she would not try to go again while the children were small. But she persuaded Mr. Noxon to go. He went and one Sunday was particularly pleased with something the minister, Rev. J. Frank Smith, said and started to applaud. His embarrassment made him decide that he too, like Mrs. Noxon, had better stay at home. It was of no use explaining to Mr. Noxon that other folks applauded also, by calling out "Amen"! or "Hallelujah," and that did happen very often.

A Mr. Hummer, one of our members, kept that kind of applause in action for many years. The habit of service to the Ladies' Aid has come on down through the Noxon family. Mrs. Mildren Noxon Lightfoot is a good Circle worker. Today the Church Nursery and Junior Church take wonderful care of the children whose parents wish to attend the church service.

In our historical collection is a program which reads:

## The Brotherhood

■ WHEN WE MOVED into the larger brick church on Bank St. (1892) the members were happy to find that the many separate class rooms in the Sunday School Dept. afforded space for many groups. Among these was a men's class. The teacher was usually the pastor. They talked "man-talk" presumably and besides taking apart and analyzing the Bible characters, they divested themselves of some opinions on how the world of their day should be carried on. Men's Bible classes became the popular thing in many churches and there was much good natured rivalry as to which one could attract the most members. Many of the members were men not really connected with any church.

Some one in our Brotherhood class came up with the happy suggestion that the Gospel of larger living could be carried out if there was an organization which would have a dinner and program meeting some week night. The Methodist Brotherhood came into being and speakers from outside our church were brought in who could expound on wordly subjects as well as those of the church.

Wagner's Opera House  
Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 29 and 30, 1895  
The Grand Dramatic Cantata  
"Jeptha's Vow"

The Great Musical Spectacle  
under the auspices of

The Ladies' Aid Society of the M. E. Church  
75 Ladies and Gentlemen in Splendid Costume

The work of the departments of the W.S.C.S. seems to cover every subject of interest and concern:

- (1) Spiritual Life—Encourages personal daily quiet time for prayer;
- (2) Status of Women—Keeps before us the opportunities for the development of every woman;
- (3) Christian Social Relations—To understand our world in the Spirit of Christ;
- (4) Missionary Education;
- (5) Student Work;
- (6) Youth Work;
- (7) Children's Work;
- (8) Literature.

To review all the possibilities and actual work of this organization would be a literary work in itself. The job is never finished. The social aspect goes along with the work. How often we hear, "Oh, I like to go to Circle meeting." The annual May Breakfast, Rose Tea, Mother-Daughter Banquet and Bazaar are wonderful events.

Under the auspices of the W.S.C.S. as a feature of the Lenten Season, Feb. 27, 1948, Atty. William G. Wickens presented "The Trial of Jesus" from the standpoint of modern court procedure. It was a very excellent presentation and created much interest. Atty. Wickens was asked to present it before other societies in Lorain.

When we are prone to complain about too much church work, it would give us a new outlook on the effective work being carried on around the world if we had our publication, "World Outlook," at hand. The church does so much good and each W.S.C.S. member helps by first being interested, then interested enough to help.

An old church bulletin of Aug. 25, 1912, when Rev. Newton E. Davis was pastor, announced that "The Brotherhood" was sponsoring a lecture by Dr. Charles M. Sheldon of Topeka, Kansas. Dr. Sheldon was a Congregational minister, author of the book, "In His Steps" or "What Would Jesus Do?" He was a guest of the Whitehouse family.

On that same bulletin, just beneath the names of the officers of "The Brotherhood" was a list of officers of "The Clan of Daniel." Judging by the names, this group was composed of the, then, boys of the church, potential Brotherhood members.

If someone has the old secretary books of either of these organizations, we could tell, by reading them, what happened next. Did Brotherhood become old fashioned?

At any rate, in 1920 we learn that "The Men's Club" was organized with Mr. Paul Brattin as its first president and Mr. George Greenwood its secretary. These two men served four years and were instrumental in building up the membership of 150, and met the second Monday of each month.

It is interesting to note that there are always men who favor being known as "brothers-in-law" of the church. They can be persuaded to belong to the Men's Club. They are sometimes listed as "butteresses," as over against "pillars" of the church. You know! Helping to hold things up from the outside, instead of the inside. You've heard of "flying butteresses" in architecture. Our variety does "flee" from certain responsibilities. However, our men did help to hold their interest and every one was rewarded by being privileged to hear fine programs. The club also offered much in sociability. Their annual Ladies' Night, Father and Son Banquet and Guest Night for Men's Clubs of other denominations were all worthy of commendation.

At the general reorganization of all church societies, the name "Men's Club" was dropped and "Methodist Men" became the new title.

This society skidded a little when the sign "No Smoking" appeared in the church dining room. The "Nobody's goin' t' tell M.E." brothers and the "I can quit any time" boys didn't want, even for one hour, to accede to the church's wishes. We of the "burning eyeballs" were just happy to think there could be one place where the air wasn't cloudy with smoke.

Early Methodists received many a spark from "Brimstone Corners" revivals, but some of the latter day saints and sinners object to the spewing of fire and smoke in the church dining room.

There have been many dynamic leaders in our men's organizations. The programs offered are always worth while. It is our hope that their work will always be effective in promoting brotherhood.

### Men's Club Notes

Laymen's Sunday, Feb. 26, 1950.

We are happy to bring to First Church this morning the Honorable Carl V. Weygant as our Laymen's Day speaker. It is to our Lay Leader, Mr. William

Wickens, that we are indebted for making the arrangements.

Men's Club officers, 1950-51: C. E. Lambdin, president; A. F. Aebersold, 1st vice president; Dean Erwin, 2nd vice president; E. G. Stant, secretary-treasurer.

### Methodist Laymen

#### General

For many years Brotherhood organizations were the chief type of activity among Methodist laymen. About ten years ago the General Board of Lay Activities was authorized by the General Conference, and headquarters were set up at 740 Rush St., Chicago. Mr. Chilton G. Bennett is the Executive Secretary.

#### Program

Stewardship and Evangelism have been the outstanding parts of the Board's program. In the Crusade for Christ, Methodist Laymen were responsible for the Stewardship phase of that great program.

#### Lay Leaders

An important aspect of this feature of Methodist policy is the provision for a Lay Leader in every local church. His opportunities for service are many and varied, the plan being designed to be adaptable according to the time the Leader has available.

#### "Methodist Men"

"Methodist Men" is the official name for organized men's work in Methodist churches. Six guiding principles are listed as a standard for this group: 1. To inspire laymen to live daily Christ's way of life. 2. To cooperate with our leaders in promoting the church program. 3. To study and become familiar with the Methodist Church, its organization and doctrines. 4. To promote personal evangelism especially among men and boys. 5. To develop Christian fellowship in the church. 6. To cooperate with other units of Methodist Men in the promotion of general church projects.

#### "The Methodist Layman"

This little monthly magazine is published by the Board of Lay Activities at \$1.50 per year.

## Sabbath School

■ THE WORD "SABBATH" has a pleasing sound. Let your mind dwell on it.

It's figurative meaning is "time of rest". How fitting that on the day of rest from our physical labors, we should gather together to talk over, learn more and teach one another about the Bible and its endless overwhelming significance for the way of life. It should be a help for each week ahead of us.

Early records speak of "Sabbath School". We have gone on from that to the label "Sunday School". We now speak of "Church School" or the "Department of Christian Education". There is much to be said concerning the origin and meaning of the words Sabbath and Sunday. Our leaders urge us to appear to keep up to the minute in the matter of our labels as well as our work, so we "evolute" from one name to another, from miscellaneous teachings, arising from our inspirations, to graded lessons prepared for general use throughout Methodism. We even work on "projects", very modern, and "do-it-yourself" learning.

Sabbath schools were probably in operation before the actual forming of a church organization.

In early Lorain, homes were opened to gatherings for the purpose of teaching the Word before a dedicated church structure was available. Some one had a concern.

After the forming of a Methodist Society in 1856 and the acquiring of a building for use in holding services, the program of activities showed the Morning Worship service at 10:30 A. M. as first for the day and Sabbath school immediately following at 12 o'clock.

One record keeper wrote that the preacher of the morning had, of necessity, to close his service on time or be prepared to "over-shout" the noise of the children coming into the vestibule ready to attend the school session. Having to use the one room — (could we dignify it by calling it the Sanctuary?) for all meetings, must have led to confusion at times.

Just fancy in your mind the gathering of even four



or five age groups in the one room and each teacher endeavoring to captivate the attention of his or her own particular group! Those must have been "stirring" sessions in more ways than one.

I see a transportation problem for those who came in from the farms. The children would of necessity have had to come with parents who wished to attend the Morning Worship service and Sabbath School. One horse, one buggy or wagon, you know. The children may have been the kind that slept through the service, Perhaps not. At 10:30 A. M. a child is wide awake and busy. Being suppressed by firm hands during church service, they were ready to start or help with anything that looked like fun or mischief, so Sabbath School held a disciplinary problem as well as a "Listen, Johnny" appeal. What a spirit of bravery and devotion to the cause all Sabbath School teachers have exhibited through the years. Early some Sunday morning when the burden appeared heavy, there was no convenience of telephoning the Supt. and asking to be excused for that day. The teacher went to her teaching task or else the Supt. had to ask some one of the assembled faithful to volunteer to take a class. With what persuasive powers any Supt. must have been endowed! So — God bless all Sabbath School superintendents and teachers.

A closer look at some of the S. S. superintendents is very revealing and shows the kind of "stuff" that was in them.

Mr. John J. Nichols, who lived  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of the village, was one of the faithful. He and his wife are described as living examples of praying Christians.

Mr. Nichols was always at his post in Church and S. School in all kinds of weather. The snow may have been too deep or crusty to expect the family horse to plow through, but Mr. Nichols and some of his children walked (?) the  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles and carried on for Christ and His cause.

Because Mr. Nichols came through a heavy rain storm one Sunday and became thoroughly drenched, then stayed through the services, he became ill with pneumonia and died.

Mr. J. B. Nichols — "Bert", one of Mr. John Nichols' sons, has written of some of his experiences in those strenuous days. These stories appear elsewhere in the History.

Mr. Truman Harry Jones — 1845-1891 — was born in Wales and came to Cleveland, when a boy, with his parents. He fought in the Civil War for two years and nine months, enlisting in Ohio Volunteer Infantry (O.V.I.), 124th regiment. He served in the battles of Chicamaqua, Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain, Wilderness, and Atlanta.

The women folks, as usual, knitted socks for the soldiers. Mr. Jones received a pair with the name of the knitter attached. The knitter was Augusta Lampman, Lorain, Ohio, and after the war Mr. Jones came to Lorain to see Miss Augusta, and liked her. I can see why. They were married here and lived in Lorain during their life together.

As a Sabbath School superintendent, Mr. Harry Jones made himself popular by promoting many "sociables", picnics, taffy-pulls, entertainments. He was very able in leading out and putting everyone and his talents to work. Miss Anna Vorwerk recalls that Mr. Jones always illustrated the Sabbath School lesson with

a "chalk talk" at the end of the day's session.

His early death was attributed to an illness brought on from the War.

A daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Augusta Jones Johnson, has made her home in California for some time.

Two of the Jones grandchildren, T. Harry Jones and Esther Jones Van Arman, children of Mark Jones, have been much interested to give me the account of their grandfather's life.

When the first railroad (Tuscarawas Valley) came to Lorain in 1872, it brought two men who, with their families, became valuable additions to the little Methodist Church in the village.

These men were Samuel Showalter and Gorham Ives Baldwin, both engineers. Looking back on the set time of their "runs" from Lorain to Wheeling and return, it seems something out of the ordinary for them to pledge themselves to give their time as Sabbath School superintendents.

Mr. Showalter's family consisted of his wife, Sarah Ann Martin Showalter, and nine children, some of them born here. One of the daughters lives here now (1956) and is a member of our church. She is Mrs. Blanche Showalter GeMeiner (Mrs. Fred) and has given of her time and talent in the woman's organizations of the church. She also served the Delaware Ave. Church, from the time of its organization, for sixteen years.

Mrs. GeMeiner tells me that her father had been raised a Dunkard and that his father had been a preacher of that faith.

The family came to Lorain from Doylestown, Ohio. We think of the Dunkards as being serious-minded, soberly-dressed people, but Mrs. GeMeiner says her father loved his jokes and loved to sing and enjoy social life.

Mr. Showalter was seriously injured in a wreck on the railroad and died Dec. 15, 1888. When his funeral was held here, his sisters came to the service dressed in the mode of the Dunkards, black bonnets and long black capes. Mrs. Showalter and the older children were fearful lest the Methodists would not understand the Dunkard ways.

All of the five sons of the Showalter family and the husbands of two of the girls followed railroad life too, beginning as telegraph operators and making their several ways to top positions. Two of them were with railroads in the Northwestern states and some of them with the Nickel Plate and C. L. & W. roads.

Mrs. GeMeiner described an elaborate Christmas entertainment of her early Sabbath School days. Instead of a tree, someone had made a ship with masts and sails as symbolic of Lorain and its leading industry. The ship was put on the platform and laden with gifts for the children. The gifts had been brought by the parents of the children. Mrs. GeMeiner also tells of Miss Rowena Moore (Mrs. Mark Jones) as being her very much loved Sabbath School teacher.

The Gorham Ives Baldwin family came to Lorain from Cleveland at the same time as the Showalter family and for the same reason. The men were assigned as engineers on the same new railroad coming into Lorain, the Tuscarawas Valley — now the B. & O.

The Baldwins at that time had one son, James.

Two more children were born here, Nellie and William.

Mr. "Gorie" Baldwin was Supt. of our Sabbath School from 1875 to 1880, serving in the old brick church on Washington Ave. Both he and Mrs. Baldwin served also in the musical life of the church.

In 1880 the family was transferred to Canal Dover, Ohio. The next year Mr. Baldwin met his death on the railroad.

In later years, Mrs. Baldwin — now Mrs. Harvey, having re-married, came back to Lorain to live and she and her children were workers in Grace M. E. Church at S. Lorain. A daughter, Myra Harvey (Mrs. Walter Mahla) had been added to the family. Nellie Baldwin Albaugh owned and operated an Art Shop in Lorain for quite some time. Dr. Wm. S. Baldwin practiced medicine here and was school physician for many years. He made a specialty of children's diseases. He served two years in the Near East during World War I.

After the Grace Church members joined First Church Mrs. Albaugh gave her time to the Sunday School, working with the small children, and now her daughter, Virginia Albaugh Hageman, is one of our faithful teachers. Virginia's son, Herman, is now keeping the family's record alive by serving with youth groups in the church. The story of four generations in one church is remarkable. "Gorie" Baldwin and his wife sowed the good seed.

Mr. George Wickens Sr. had the opportunity to serve as our S. S. Supt. longer than his predecessors. He served in that capacity for 15 years.

Mr. Wickens was born in England in 1852. In 1871 he left home for Canada and in the early Spring of 1873 he came to Lorain. His fiery red hair, long red mustache, bushy brows and infectious grin indicated that things had to move fast when he took charge. He had a way of enthusing people and making them believe they too had what it took to get things done. Perhaps the older, more staid sisters and brothers of the church blinked their eyes a bit at this different approach.

In 1875 he married Celia A. Chapman, daughter of an early Lorain family. She died in 1876, leaving a son, George B., six days of age.

In 1877 Mr. Wickens returned to England and was married to Miss M. A. Colley. They came to Lorain in 1881 and Mr. Wickens engaged in the building and contracting business.

In 1883 he opened a furniture and undertaking establishment, progressing continuously. He had many "firsts" to his credit through the years, among them a span of beautiful Arabian horses to pull the funeral hearse. They didn't appear to pull, however. They stepped proudly with heads held high. Another first was Parkside Chapel — a fine funeral home. It is now the Christian Science Church and Reading Room.

Mr. Wickens had long been interested in religious and temperance work. While he was in England the second time — in 1878 — he had been granted a local preacher's license by the London District of Wesleyan Church. This added to his efficiency as a church worker and he was one of those men of our church who gave time and energy to organize Simpson Chapel, later 20th St. Church. This was during the pastorate (1st Church) of Rev. J. P. Mills.

Mr. Wickens' family from his second marriage, Wm., Elizabeth and Edward Mark (s) were all members of the church. At present we are happy to number Mrs. Grace Huyck Wickens (Mrs. Wm.), Mrs. Maud Briggs Wickens (Mrs. E. M.) and grandson Wm. Wickens Jr. with his family, as working members of First Church.

Mr. George Wickens Sr. married a third time, his wife being Elizabeth Wallace Wickens who served all of her life in our church and Sunday School.

There does not seem to be a complete list of Sunday School Superintendents but the following have served:

Prof. F. D. Ward, 1898; Samuel Wire, S. A. Kurtz, George Creamer, Frank Ayres, Fred Johnson, E. M. McCaskey, Harley Nearhood, Mrs. C. J. W. Luttrell, Frank Proctor, Ed Peter, Wayne Weitzman.

Someone has facetiously remarked that the initials S.S. now (1936) mean Social Security and not Sabbath School. However that may be it seems as though a complete account of our "Sabbath Security" could never be finished. Give a thought to all the fine people who have made it their concern that we carry on the work, begun back in the days when there was no organized church society in Lorain.

# The Church Is Destroyed and Rebuilt

■ LORAIN HAS HAD a number of destructive storms in its history but the tornado of Saturday, June 28, 1924, which destroyed our church building is the worst on record. Our church was not the only one to suffer. The Congregational, Emmanuel Evangelical, Christian, and St. Mary's Catholic churches were also completely destroyed and had to be rebuilt, while St. John's Evangelical and Reformed, the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, and the 7th St. African Methodist Churches were also severely damaged.

A number of our church families lost loved ones. Mrs. Askew lost her older sister, Blanche Berg; Richard Mills lost his first wife, Gertrude, and Margaret Brown and Mrs. James Grills lost a little sister of 11, Evelyn Brown. Sixteen-year-old Willis Plunkett was one of our Sunday School boys who died a hero, he escaped from the State Theater but went back inside and rescued several smaller children before the roof fell and killed him.

Perhaps the worst tragedy among our church people, if one can be called worse than another, took place in the Van Deusen home. Mrs. Van Deusen's brother's family were visiting, and of the ten people present in their home, five were killed, including the Van Deusen baby, Wilbur. Among the more seriously injured of our people were Mrs. T. R. Bowen, Mrs. Harry Naylor, Dick Van Deusen and Clyde Tippet. Many others lost their homes, and only the kind gifts of many outsiders prevent financial ruin for some of them.

The last person in our church building before it was destroyed was the organist, Mrs. A. S. Gregg, who had played on the foundations of the church as a little girl while it was being built. She has left us an account of these last moments in her own words.

\* \* \* \*

## MY TORNADO EXPERIENCE

By Celia Bowen Gregg

One the afternoon that the tornado struck Lorain, I was practicing at the organ for the Sunday services at the First M. E. Church. I had chosen numbers that I thought would not need much practice for my daughter was ill at home and I was anxious to return to her, but I kept making mistakes and consequently stayed longer than I wished. When the electricity went off, although I thought it would soon come back, I jumped down from the console very quickly and closed the manual saying that I would risk it.

I reached the vestibule and opened the door (with difficulty because of the wind) but the rain was so heavy and so opaque that I could not see across the street. I closed the door and then heard a bang in the church which I thought was a door closing caught by the wind from the door I had opened. Another bang followed and soon I heard bricks falling and glass breaking. I thought, "This is not a very safe place to be. I might as well be outside in the storm." That is the last I remember.

When I regained consciousness, I was in bed with my face bleeding and a wet rag in my hand. I remember thinking, "If they had given me a dry rag, it would have stopped the bleeding quicker," but no wonder as to where I was or what had happened

entered my mind. Finally a man came up the stairs with a lamp in his hand and asked me who I was. (He said later that he was afraid I would lose consciousness before I could tell him.) My answer was, "I am Mrs. Gregg, organist of the First Methodist Church. Who are you?" He said he was Frank Pierce, and I said, "Oh! You ought to know me. I used to be Celia Bowen." He said, "I will go at once and let your people know where you are."

Very soon Doctor Dager was there and, while someone held the lamp, he sewed up my lip and the other cut. He did a most excellent job, too. Then Albert came and I felt safe and secure.

The next day toward noon, Mr. Gregg chopped away branches of fallen trees and managed to get the car up to the Pierce home. He and a Cleveland policeman helped me downstairs, into the car, and brought me home and put me in my own bed where I remained for the next three weeks as everything turned black for me when I lifted my head.

It was some time before I knew what had happened during the four hours I was unconscious. As nearly as I can tell, Jimmie Lyons was on his way over to the Moore home where he knew his fiancée, Elinor, was alone, when he found me lying on the ground out by the lamp post. He thought I was a foreign woman. At the time Mrs. Herkner came over and told him not to bring me over there as the wires were down. Whether she helped him get me into the Pierce house or he carried me, I do not know. But I was put where it was dry and then she went back to her children and he went over to Moore's where he found the back of the house blown off and naturally forgot about this strange (?) woman.

"Monk" Pierce and his wife, knowing their father and his wife were away came over to see what shape the house was in. They heard me groaning inside. Mrs. Pierce took me upstairs and put me in the only dry bed in the house. She thought I was the Pierce maid. Later Mr. Frank Pierce and his wife came down from Elyria to see how his people were, and when his brother told them of this woman at his father's house, they thought I should have care and so came to see how I was.

In the meantime, Mr. Gregg had searched the church from top to basement and had pulled away bricks till he came to the organ pedals and knew that I was not there. He called at all the houses around the church and was entering the Pierce home when someone told him that the Pierces were away and that I would not be there. He had been at the High School building and looked over the dead bodies there. He went home to tell the children that he was going to the hospital to see if I had been taken there. On his way to the hospital, he was met by Mr. Pierce who told him where I was.

I had always thought of Albert with a great deal of sympathy for those anxious hours, but had never thought much about the children until Catherine came home from school sometime the next year and said that the teacher wanted the pupils to write a theme about their tornado experiences. She said, "I don't want to write about my tornado experiences. It was

bad enough to live through them without having to put them on paper and going over them again."

\* \* \* \*

Those who lived through the tornado in Lorain will realize how much of the picture is missing in many of the written accounts. The rain, which continued almost all night, the fallen trees which rendered the streets impassable and walking difficult, the devastated buildings on every side—all were a part of it. The first church service after the building was destroyed was held the next morning outdoors in Washington Park. It was a beautiful, sunny day. People had barely had time to assess the damage, and over in the Van Deusen home the dead and injured were still being dug out of the ruins. Rev. Hess, the minister,

looked at his congregation standing among the uprooted trees and said, "We have lost much, and there is much work to be done. It will take money, so we may as well start now and take a collection." Over fifty dollars was given in the first collection outdoors in the park.

The Official Board held its first meeting after the tornado outdoors on the steps of St. Mary's new parochial school which had survived the tornado. They decided to draw up plans for a new building and had their pictures taken there on the school steps. It required two and a half years to bring these plans to fruition but when the new building was dedicated, Rev. C. B. Hess was still the minister, and Mrs. Gregg played the new organ for the dedication services.

## Relaying of First Cornerstone

By JOSEPH J. HROMODA

The Lorain Journal—1925

■ FOR THE SECOND time in their lives, six persons Monday viewed the laying of the same cornerstone.

Thirty-three years ago, Samuel Butler, Thomas R. Bowen, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Whitehouse, Edward Smith, and James Dutton, were present when the cornerstone of the First M. E. Church was placed in what they thought would be its last resting place. For thirty-two years the building and cornerstone were undisturbed. Then the tornado of June 28 laid low the church.

The present congregation, undaunted, scrapped the remains of the old church, and started to rebuild. The 500 pounds of sandstone comprising the cornerstone was laid aside.

On Monday the cornerpiece was broken and its entombed contents were brought to light. A tin box, the vault in which the reminiscences had been placed, fell apart as it was lifted, disclosing the contents.

Intact, but yellowed copies of the Lorain Times for June 15, 1892; The New York Christian Advocate; Methodist Watchman, a former local publication and The Lorain Daily News for June 11, 1892 were found. A history of the church, a hymnal, a copy of the new testament, a list of Garden Ave. school students, some church documents and a one-cent

piece were also discovered.

Rev. C. B. Hess considered that it would be an appropriate honor to have the various articles put in a box plus some tornado pictures and to have the cornerstone placed in an honorary part of the new building. So on Monday at 2:30 p. m. workmen placed the cornerstone in the northwestern part of the church that is being constructed while the six veterans of the congregation stood by. The sandstone will serve as a commemoration to the older members.

Following is a list of the persons who have been members of the congregation for thirty-five years or more: Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Butler, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas R. Bowen, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Whitehouse, Mrs. Fannie Wilford, Mrs. Elizabeth Purcell, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Smith, Mr. and Mrs. James Dutton, Mrs. J. M. Jaycox, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Goodell, Mrs. Elizabeth Wickens, Mrs. L. W. McElfresh, Mrs. A. W. Sanford, Mrs. Frank Noxon, Captain and Mrs. R. J. Lyons, Mrs. Sarah Showalter, Mr. and Mrs. B. G. Nichols, Judge and Mrs. W. B. Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Pistel and Miss Edith Watkins.

The first M. E. congregation was started back in 1856, in 1875 their membership had reached 95, and has been growing ever since.



# Onward and Upward In Choir Loft

■ THE EARLY PIONEERS were great singers and while not too much is known about the formal music in the early church it is on record that when the new classes were formed early in 1857 they were careful to distribute the best singers and musicians equitably among them. Who the singers so distributed might have been is unknown, but we do know that once in each generation both the Gillmore and Osgood families have produced a fine singing voice or two and have long served as the backbone of both the Methodist and the Congregational choirs. But in those days, everybody sang lustily, good voice or no, and many of the pioneer women had sufficient musical training to accompany hymns on the piano or parlor organ. The first person to hold the official title of church organist was Roland Osgood, which meant he played the old reed organ for the preaching services, and probably led the choir.

It is impossible to mention all the musicians who have contributed so much to the church over a century by name within the compass of one short article, and the most we can hope to do is cover the high spots. The organist most oldesters remember in the first brick church was Helen Fox. That organ was pumped by hand, a traditional function of small boys, and many an oldest's memory of that little church is of Helen Fox at the organ, Captain Cowley's head standing out above the others in the choir, and the head of the small boy going regularly up and down with the pump handle in the back.

The choir loft in the first little brick church was on the ground floor, and from thence the choir has moved ever upward in a physical sense although its progress in a musical sense has been somewhat more erratic. One of its lowest points, musically, came following the organization of the Congregational church, for at that time the choir lost all of the Osgood and most of the Gillmore voices. It was not until these were replaced by Whitehouse voices a decade later that the choir revived and entered one of its more vigorous periods. In the summertime through the '80's it was a small affair composed of women's voices, but in the fall when the men came home off the lakes and the bass and tenor were added the effect was inspiring and the entire congregation sang gloriously. The singers of that period included Capt. and Mrs. Cowley, Capt. and Mrs. Wilford, Mrs. T. R. Bowen, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Whitehouse, Gorham Baldwin and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Smith among others.

A mixed quartet composed of Mrs. Bowen, Capt. and Mrs. Wilford and Capt. Cowley, used to be a favorite on all sorts of programs. Cowley in his younger days had a clear, ringing bass, and his favorite solo was "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep," where the concluding notes permitted his voice to descend with a satisfying clarity and power.

The pipe organ built in the new church on Reid Ave. cost \$1,450 (Felgemaker, Erie, Pa., manufacturer) and the congregation was very proud of it. The music-loving widow of Ebenezer Gregg is known to have made the largest contribution, a gift of \$50.00. Unfortunately the organ was not com-

pleted in time for the dedication, and Miss Jennie Smith, then the organist, had to play the dedication services on the old reed organ with the boy's head going up and down as usual. However, as Anna Vorwerk later wrote, "The people were used to the old reed organ and didn't mind." The new pipe organ was a two-manual affair with pull stops on the sides and a full complement of pedals. It was operated by a water motor, which was changed to electric sometime preceding the first World War.

In the new brick church on Reid Ave., the choir took another step heaven-ward, occupying the center of attention directly behind the minister where their conduct theoretically had to be exemplary, and where they didn't miss a thing that went on in the congregation. There is an odd notice in the Herald of that day that a "new choir was elected." Just how they were "elected" and who elected them is uncertain, but one thing is sure. Time had passed, and time takes its toll of even the best voices. The accent in that notice was on youth.

Miss Jennie Smith did not remain organist very long for she married and moved away, but she had to continue until Cora Wilford Bartenfeld, who had been playing for the Sunday School and taking organ lessons in Elyria, was "ready" about 1894, two years after she finished high school, and she played the organ off and on for over 15 years.

Of all the earlier organists, Edward K. Lane, the husband of Mrs. Bowen's eldest daughter, Georgiana Reid, was probably the best-trained. He learned his organ in the east and was a first-rate organist, but tragically lost his hearing very early, a blow he bore bravely and with fortitude. He was Mrs. Gregg's first organ teacher. The most promising of the young organists was Horace Whitehouse but we did not keep him long for the Congregationalists lured him away by offering 50 cents a Sunday more. They did not keep the ambitious youth long either for he went away to study and ultimately became the head of the organ department in Northwestern University.

When Celia Bowen Gregg, having been duly "broken in" playing for the Sunday School was "ready" at about 19, she took over the position of organist shortly after her graduation from high school, and for years Mrs. Bartenfeld and Mrs. Gregg, the best of friends, alternated periods of organ playing amicably between them. Both women had short legs and had trouble reaching the pedals, so the janitor obligingly sawed off the legs of the organ bench for them saying, "Nobody but Mrs. Gregg and Mrs. Bartenfeld play the organ anyway." Everything was fine until Horace Whitehouse, tall and long-legged, came home for a visit and was asked to play. He couldn't understand why the organ bench was so unusually low, and nobody bothered to tell him.

The circumstances surrounding the organization of the Congregational Church made some rivalry between the two inevitable. Most of this has been happily forgotten, but the rivalry reached its most intense and probably its merriest point in the choir loft, and that phase of it should not be lost to mem-

ory. It found voice in the oft-repeated words of Thad Barrows, one of our tenors back in the '90's "You take our choir and the Congregational choir," Thad used to exclaim, "and give them an equal number of rehearsals and then have a contest and we'd sing 'em blind!" Thad's contest never took place, but the two churches busily outbid each other for the services of almost every professional musician in town, with particular emphasis on school music supervisors who were seized on for choir directors.

For a time the choir directors sounded like counting off sides for a game. There was D. W. Kern (we got him), Griffith J. Jones (they got him), Ralph Wright (we got him), Tom Caskey (we got him), Wilbur Tipton (we got him first, then they lured him away), and Norman Park (they got him and we lured him away). During the intervals when the Congregationalist had the school music people we had Jack Winkler, the conductor of the Men's Glee Club from Oberlin College, and Leslie Emary, whom we lured from the Baptists. The choir reached the acme of physical height under Mr. Tipton when we moved into the present church.

In contrast to the choir directors, most of our organists and singers have been home-grown, so to speak, but not all. Dorothy Wirc and Catherine Fauver both played the organ while they were students in Oberlin Conservatory, but for the most part the succession has run Mrs. Bartenfeld to Mrs. Gregg to Mrs. McCaskey. In 1926, in common with many Protestant churches the country over, the Official Board broke the sequence by ruling that our church young people could not use the organ for

practice. The ruling was later rescinded, but not until the damage was done, for nothing short of plowing them under was quite so guaranteed to produce a scarcity of organists. Families could not buy pipe organs for their young folks to practice on at home, nor could all of them afford conservatory training, and at least one of our church young people used the organ at the Polish Catholic church for practice.

The professional jealousies and rivalries of musicians have always mystified non-musicians who are inclined to lay it to "temperament." At one time the bickering in the choir loft grew so great that some people in the congregation began calling the choir the "War Department." Yet there have been periods of very excellent work. Following the choir of the '80's and '90's, there was a period early in the 20th century when the combined city church choirs were producing great oratorios in the Musical Union. Another period of fine musicianship was when Norman Park had the choir singing in Christiansen style. Memory brings back the sound of many beautiful voices echoing from the past. There are those who remember the rolling baritone of Ray Eymann whom we lured from the United Brethren, the fine bass of Richard Davis (a Whitehouse), the rich contralto of Ruby Ayres Anthony, and the pure, flawless tones of Fannie Mae Bartenfeld (a Gillmore) singing "Come Unto Him." The music that has poured forth from our church has gone on to enrich the whole community, and beyond. Our musicians have indeed given us much.

## Church Music

### ■ "METHODISM WAS BORN in song."

We presume that when the good gentlemen evangelists came to Black River or Charleston to interest the villagers in Methodism that some effective singing as well as preaching, was done. To arouse the transplanted New Englanders and others who came from the staid traditions of the Presbyterian and Congregational churches, required enthusiastic singing.

One brother reported that the revival meetings were held "in the schoolhouse, 20 or 30 rods away" from the old wooden church building, 20 or 30 rods which way was not told. We presume, again, that a schoolhouse of those days contained no musical instrument, therefore unaccompanied singing was the rule.

Robert McCutcheon in "A Singing Church" writes, "Hymns . . . provided necessary emotional outlet of the people through voicing those intimate devotional thoughts which so many have, and so few the capacity to express." Sophistication and self-consciousness are the bane of congregational singing, in the Lorain Methodist Church as elsewhere. The singing of hymns is the part of worship where we can express our praise and faith, if we will.

It is reasonable to expect that when the Methodists of early Lorain accepted the use of the old wooden church building formerly used by the Presbyterians, that they might have inherited a possible reed organ. However, if there was no organ the service went on.

As for its being a spur to singing it really wasn't necessary, as there was always a good sister or brother whose spirit just bubbled over and they would burst forth with "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing" or "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" or "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me."

If there was an organ, the service did take on a little more form, a prelude and another number at the time of the offering. That first organist with that first reed organ had to keep many things on his mind beside the notes. He could not forget to pump the two pedals with his feet (very ankle-reducing) to keep the wind in the bellows, or "knee" the swell-boards for a bit of variety in volume, or pull out the "tremolo" stop for a heart-warmer. If he was overcome by his own dexterity or lack of it, the effect was not good.

When the style in organs changed and a pumper was put to work, the dividing of effort made for a continuity of tone, etc.

Besides the organists mentioned in article one, it was learned that Miss Mary Moore, from one of the East Shore families, also served until her marriage to W. A. Jewett and subsequent moving from Lorain. The Jewett family later returned and were valued members of the church. Other members of the Moore family were Mrs. Elmina Gawn, Mrs. Amelia Faragher, Capt. Truman Moore and Mr. Leonard Moore, Sr.

The piano stage of church music sufficed, I expect,

but somehow the real pipe organ in the Bank St. edifice seemed to proclaim that we were again progressing.

Mr. Edward Smith (Ted), father of our first pipe organist, was a very great asset to the music in both the old brick and the new brick churches. He must have been a man of foresight too, for in preparation for Miss Jennie's taking over the work of organist, he had a set of regular organ pedals made for use at the family piano for practice purposes. That, plus instruction from one of Cleveland's finest organists, James H. Rogers, fitted Miss Smith for the new work.

Mr. Smith was one of the early choir directors. He came to Lorain from West Bromwich, England, in 1881. He possessed a splendid tenor voice, the key to Heaven, they say (and not many keys issued), and was acquainted with the best in musical literature. He also played the flute. At one time he organized and directed a family orchestra, his five children plus numerous nieces and nephews. They acted as our Sunday School orchestra also. A daughter, Miss Florence Smith, is still a member of our church, now active in Circle work. Two grand-daughters (children of Dr. E. F. Smith, deceased) and three great grand-children of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Smith, are also with us, and the musical interest goes on. That work, Sunday School orchestra, was later taken over by Mr. Charles Bartenfeld. Sunday School orchestras really rehearsed and played orchestral numbers as well as leading out in the hymns. The days before radio came along were something to remember in a musical way. A real "do-it-yourself" accomplishment, was the order of the day.

How we like to see a choir loft full of singers, but now we sort of have to "beg" people to help sing. In 1892, at the time the new brick church was dedicated, we find the town newspaper telling that our choir was "elected." Fancy that! Someone asked who did the electing. Have you forgotten the dear people who served on the Music Committees through the years? They wore out many pairs of gloves handling difficult situations.

Here are the "elected," five on each part. A well-balanced choir: Sopranos—Mrs. W. W. Whitehouse, Mrs. Edward Smith, Miss Clara Norton, Miss Daisy Noxon, Miss Mamie Fix; Altos—Miss Rosa Coulter, Miss Jennie Griffith, Miss Louie Vernam, Miss Cora Wilford, Mrs. C. H. Wilkens; Tenors—Mr. Edward Smith, Mr. Hal E. Davidson, Dr. C. W. Purcell, Mr. C. F. Bartenfeld, Mr. E. Richards; Bass—Mr W. W. Whitehouse, Mr. M. N. Eldred, Mr. F. D. Ward, Mr. George M. Pfeiffer, Mr. Thomas Richards.

These folks wore high, high collars and tight ones at that. (They were bound to sing, as it were.) Who knows, perhaps that led to some of the odd facial expressions exhibited while singing. Today, . . . you take it from there.

The style of church music has changed along with the changing times. New themes, old themes with a new angle, new emphasis on action and service are all noted in our hymn books and anthems.

Our Sunday School songs were so very different than the majestic church hymns. The catchy swaying rhythm appealed to many people. The sentiment of the words was sometimes pretty earthy. Perhaps you recall Mr. Lee Vickers of not so long ago, whose joy was in leading the Gospel hymns. He sang and

smiled his religion all the way. "The Old Rugged Cross" was his favorite.

To bring the attention of our congregation to the music and musicians, one of our choir directors wrote a column, "The Choir Loft", which appeared in the Messenger each week. It dealt with the anthem of the day, something concerning hymn-tunes, words, composers and authors, the soloist and choir personnel.

The following is an excerpt from the "Choir Loft" of Nov. 4, 1945, "The order of worship reminds us that during the playing of the organ prelude the congregation should be in an attitude of devout meditation. Sometimes our only meditation is on what pew we shall occupy—we're late for church, you see. Come in time some morning to hear the prelude and prepare for the service which follows.

Mrs. McCaskey plays for us three excellent organ selections every Sunday, all for a definite part of our devotion. Her understanding accompaniment for hymns, solos and anthems is exacting work, well done.

The church organist carries the heaviest part of the burden of the music for our service. Part of her compensation could be your attention and appreciation. We salute her."

This column, "The Choir Loft", was discontinued when postal regulations curtailed the amount of local church news that could be in the Messenger for the price postage we felt we could pay, to send the Messenger through the mail to our many members.

Let's go back a few years. Like so many of the subjects written for this history, this story of our church music seems never ending.

The following is a list of former choir directors whose names were not in article one. These people corrected our mistakes, brought the harmony of parts around to a reasonable basis and hoped for the best on Sunday morning when we rose to sing and responded to his baton: Dr. Charles Purcell, Mr. Harry Marshall, Mr. George Carrier, Mr. Edward Kiefer, Mr. Frank Whitehouse, Mrs. Lila Black, Mr. Daniel Harris, Mr. Walter Morey, Mr. Richard Sutch, Mr. Robt. Leckrone, Mr. Lloyd Oppelt, Mrs. Frank Ayres, Mr. J. D. Lewis, Mr. Alan Hulsman; Junior Choir: Mrs. W. T. Greer, Mrs. Alfred Askew.

In contrast to the elected choir of years ago, there have been many volunteer choirs. At one time when Mr. Samuel Wire was chairman of the Music Committee, it was decided to hire a quartet of selected singers, because the volunteer idea didn't seem to work out. The quartet was paid, each member receiving five dollars a Sunday. We learned that the twenty dollars paid out each week was Mr. Wire's own contribution to harmony of a high caliber. The singing was good but the idea didn't please the congregation for long. Volunteers again were the order of the day.

During 1944 - 1945, an all women's choir was used. Many of our men singers were either in service or busy in war work. This choir never exceeded sixteen in number but the music they sang was always top quality and beautifully done. As they arranged themselves around the organ and gave strict attention to direction, you were confident that here

indeed was a praise-worthy group. Our ministers are all interested in the music of the church. It seems to be a fine thing when they will take the time to attend choir rehearsal and offer a prayer for the devotion to and success of our service.

"Ho! Everyone that thirsteth!"

"Oh Praise ye God in the Heaven"

"Souls of the Righteous"

"How Lovely are the Messengers"

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit."

As the hymns embrace every phase of Christian life, so it is with the anthems as noted in the above titles of a few of those used in our church.

The anthem is a product of a musical mind, and skill that manifests itself in a more elaborate and intricate composition than the hymn.

Some of you say, "Just give me a plain, old tune."

The musician rejoices in possessing the art of composing and in having the soul satisfying outlet of singing or playing the more elaborate composition.

Audience, consider your church musicians. Their work is not meant to be entertainment, but a promotion of worship. The church musicians' highest hope is to praise God, using their precious personal possession, their God-given talent.—Music.

Edna Whitehouse Ayres

## Dodge Chapel

■ ON JANUARY 30, 1944, at a meeting of the Youth Council, the idea of building a chapel as part of the permanent equipment of the First Methodist Church was first projected. In order to start this effort the young people expressed themselves as being willing to pay their own expenses to Camp Craig and Lakeside Institute and devote the money which they would ordinarily use for that purpose to a chapel fund. Arrangements were then made to present the matter before the Official Board for their approval. Miss Marjorie Burke, then president of the Youth Council, was so commissioned.

On February 9, 1944, Miss Burke came before the Board with the plans of the young people. Many words of appreciation were spoken of the action of the young people in their willingness to begin such an effort, but a decision was postponed until the next regular meeting. On March first it was officially voted to accept the suggestion of the young people and when sufficient funds were available and building plans were approved by the Official Board, the chapel should be built.

In the meantime, the thought was born in the heart of Mrs. C. P. Dodge, who, together with her late husband, spent many years of gracious service in this church, to set aside the sum of \$2000.00 to be used in building a chapel. On Sept. 28, 1944 this money was formally turned over to Mr. James C. Hageman, Treasurer of the Building Fund. However, due to war conditions, it was impossible to begin building the chapel until the next year.

On Jan. 10, 1945 the plans and prices submitted by the Theodor Kundtz Co. of Cleveland, Ohio were accepted by the Board and adopted. The committee, consisting of C. S. Kelsner, Custer Snyder, G. F. Creamer, and the pastor, Charles Frederick Jones, was authorized to proceed.

An opportunity was offered to others to share in furnishing the chapel, resulting in the following gifts which honor or memorialize the faithful services of loved ones. The dorsal frame, above the altar, was given in memory of Rev. James L. and Lillian S. Sanford, by their son and daughters, Frank Sanford, Mrs. W. B. Thompson, and Mrs. H. C. Harris. The chancel rail honors Jerry G. and Margaret A. Greenwood. The altar memorializes Richard R. Fauver and was presented by his mother, Mrs. L. A. Fauver, and his widow, Mrs. Elnora Fauver. The pulpit is given in memory of Lieut Richard Creamer by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Creamer.

The two pulpit chairs memorialize Elmer and Alpha Richards and were given by Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Love. The lectern, memorializing Walter Whitehouse and honoring Mary Lees Davis Whitehouse, is the gift of the family, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Whitehouse, Mr. and Mrs. Horace Whitehouse, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Murbach, and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Ayres. The cross and candlesticks are the gifts of the Youth Council.

Although pews for the chapel are not yet available, one will be set apart to honor Mr. and Mrs. George Greenwood, one has been given in memory of Mr. Harold A. Oliver by his widow, Mrs. Isabelle Oliver, and one in memory of Mr. S. A. Kurtz, given by his widow, Mrs. Nellie E. Kurtz.

The Dedication Service, held on Sunday, Feb. 3, at 2:30 o'clock, was conducted by Bishop Raymond J. Wade, D.D., L.L.D., of the Detroit Area, assisted by Dr. Herbert J. Thompson, District Superintendent of the Norwalk District, and the minister, Rev. Charles Frederick Jones.

Mr. Neal McCaskey, now president of the Youth Council, made the formal presentation of the Chapel to the Bishop.



# Burning of the Mortgage

■ "CLIMAXING OVER 22 YEARS of working, giving and hoping for the time when its building would be free of debt, members of First Methodist Church are gathering this morning, Sunday, Sept. 19, 1948, to witness the burning of the mortgage on their church.

Taking part in the ceremony are members of the church who witnessed the destruction of the old and the building of the new.

H. E. Hageman and L. G. Goodell were original members of the building committee. C. S. Kelser was secretary of the board of trustees at the time of dedication.

Mrs. C. L. Tope was president of the Ladies' Aid

Society and Frank Ayres is the chairman of the "Burn the Mortgage" committee.

Rev. Charles B. Hess started the long road toward reducing the debt of more than \$300,000.

When Rev. Charles F. Jones came to Lorain six years ago he faced a balance of \$38,000. Rev. Jones reports that the women of the church have played a major part in reducing the mortgage by sponsoring dinners which brought in about \$60,000."

From "Lorain Sunday News."

That was a long pull. The kitchen gadgets will wonder what has become of the working sisters who sang (?) at the steam table.

## The Chimes and Amplification System

"The Messenger"—December, 1947

■ MRS. C. P. DODGE who has already honored this church with her gifts, presents to the First Methodist Church, in memory of her husband, a beautiful set of Deagan Cathedral Chimes and amplification system.

Deagan Cathedral Chimes are the most advanced products of the world's largest maker of chimes, bells and carillons. They are 21 in number, cast from a special formula bell metal and then drawn to size, finished in light golden-hued bronze, and installed in the organ chamber of our church.

Their scale range permits the playing of most selections in the original key. They operate through a transformer and are furnished with a cable which permits placing the chimes where they are. The organist plays the chimes from the console of the organ.

The amplifier for the chimes is installed in three parts: microphones, cabinet housing and amplifiers, and the outside speakers.

There are two microphones inside the organ chamber, one to pick up the chimes alone and the other for the organ and chimes when used together.

There are three units in the cabinet which is located in the left hand alcove behind the choir. On the top shelf is a record player which will play eight

and ten inch records mixed, commonly called a "mixer-changer". The record player has a capacity of ten ten inch records or eight twelve inch. When the last record has played the instrument shuts off automatically.

A pre-amplifier with three inputs is located directly below the record and the record player. The three inputs are for the two microphones and the record player. The three inputs may be combined in any desired proportion.

The main eighty watt amplifier is located on the bottom of the cabinet.

The main amplifier drives four speakers which are mounted outside on the two chimneys, two speakers to a chimney. The speakers are oriented to give full 360 degree coverage around the church.

The cabinet is provided with a lock and an inside switch so that the equipment can be turned on by authorized persons only. A second switch is located at the organ console.

The Chimes and Amplification System will be dedicated at the Christmas Carol and Candle Light Vesper Service (7:00 P. M. Dec. 21) by Dr. Herbert J. Thompson, District Superintendent of Norwalk District.

## Old Church Bell

■ THE LITTLE BRICK CHURCH on Washington Ave. had a bell for which Mrs. Terza Burton was largely responsible as she was instrumental in raising the funds to pay for it.

It was the custom to hold funerals in the church as there were no funeral homes as now. The church bell tolled the age of the deceased. Often the bell would still be tolling as the body was being lowered into the grave, if the interment was in the old Bank St. (6th St.) Cemetery.

As the bell was tolling out the age of Mrs. Burton it seemed to feel the loss of its sponsor and cracked

from top to bottom and could never be used again. Mrs. Burton's grand-daughter is Mrs. Goldie Slater Richards (Mrs. Chas.) who will help us celebrate our Centennial.

The church bell idea seems to have almost gone (1956). One silly reason given was that the people in town who wanted to sleep on Sunday morning were "annoyed" by the bells. The writer and many others, I hope, like the pleasant sound of many bells telling us that the Church is expecting us to come along to worship.

## Candle-Light Service

■ "THE DEDICATION of the new Lorain Methodist Church was carried out on schedule Jan. 8, 1893 but with one untoward incident that almost caused a panic," according to the columns of Lorain Times and Herald. "As a result of this accident part of the evening service was conducted with only a single coal-oil lamp as illumination.

"Toward the close of the sermon the gas lights flickered for a moment and finally puffed out. The only remaining light was the small coal-oil lamp on the pulpit. . . .

"Visions of an explosion when the lamps should be re-lighted came to many and a very marked restlessness became apparent in the room.

"The nervous ones were partially reassured by the minister, who explained that something about the gas was out of order, but would soon be set right.

"The jets were relighted as soon as it could be done and everyone breathed easier.

"The gas is supplied by a patent gasoline gas machine and the janitor had forgotten to wind it up."

## Ladies' Aid Minstrels

■ THE LADIES' AID SOCIETY of First M. E. Church presents its Military Minstrel Maids, Tuesday and Wednesday Evenings, February 17 and 18, 1925. High School Auditorium, Lorain, Ohio.

Personell: Interlocutor, Mrs. Netta Standen.

Premier End Ladies: Miss Lulu White, Miss Lavern Stone, Mrs. Grace Cox, Mrs. Edna Ayres.

Soloists: Mrs. Maude Brattin, Mrs. Alice Smith, Mrs. Margaret Hurst, Mrs. Erma Askew, Master John Beck.

Chorus: Pearl Tope, Louise Vickers, Gladys Williams, Blanch Smith, Lottie Lucas, Laura Neptune, Stella Briggs, Beatrice Curtis, Myrtle Wood, Lora Saegers, Margaret Redding, Marguerite Hartz, Ina McIlvaine, Helen Newhall, Ella Miller, Blanch Moore, Evaline Mills, Edna Basore, Mary Erwin, Margaret Bunker, Nina Hildreth, Ruth Hauter, Esther Dutton, Martha Dutton, Nina Scott, Gertrude Grills, Elizabeth Garver, Lillian Hicok, Clara Hageman, Margaret Hess, Katherine Reeder, Mae Kelsor, Dorothy Cleveland, Olive Metzger, Marie Homen, Nina Allen, Mrs. Fowl.

Program: Opening Overture, Entire Company; "Because They All Loved You," Mrs. Hurst; "I'd Love to Be the Monkey in the Zoo," Miss Stone; "The Pal That I Loved Stole the Gal That I Loved, Mrs. Askew; "Pretty Little Blue Eyed Sally," Mrs. Cox, John Beck; "Jealous," Mrs. Smith; "I Didn't Ask, He

Didn't Say, So I Didn't Know," Miss White; "Eliza," Mrs. Ayres.

Staff of Military Minstrel Maids: Manager and Producer, Grace C. Vorwerk; Press Representatives, Mrs. Hoiles, Mrs. Hyde; Ticket Representatives, Mrs. Herron, Mrs. Erwin; Director of Chorus, Mrs. Edna Ayres; Pianist, Mrs. Evelyn McNutt; Orchestra, P. J. Stephen.

General Chairman: Mrs. E. M. Love; Costumes: Mesdames Kochenderfer, Greenwood, Miller, Bartenfeld, W. Goodell, L. Goodell.

Olio, Tuesday, Feb. 17: (a) Solo, Miss Marcella Smith; (b) Reading, Miss Mary A. Ristine; (c) Solo, Mrs. W. W. Whitehouse; (d) Hungarian Dance, Miss Georgiana Rusin.

Rainbow Girls Orchestra, Miss Maurine Stuthers, Director.

Olio, Wednesday, Feb. 18: (a) Solo, Miss Smith; (b) Reading, Miss Helen Schwert; (c) Japanese Dance, Miss Georgiana Rusin; (d) Solo, Mrs. John Spangler; (e) Solo, Mrs. W. W. Whitehouse; (f) Selection, Eastern Star Quartette.

\* \* \*

This show just popped with surprising, unexpected talent. It brought a tidy sum for our building fund. If laughter helps, it did us all good, but, someone thought it tended to upset our worshipful attitude.

## Lyceum

May 7, 1884

■ A VERY PROFITABLE meeting of the Methodist Episcopal Lyceum was held last Friday evening at the residence of Mrs. Jas. Chapman on Broadway.

The recitations were well delivered and showed evidence of careful preparation. After various other exercises, the discussion listened to the question, "Resolved, that Christopher Columbus deserves more praise for discovering America than George Washington for defending it."

Miss Mida Pershing and Edward Horn argued affirmatively while John Horn and Joseph Babcock took the floor for the negative.

Miss Emma Vorwerk was elected to fill the vacancy made by the resignation of Pres. J. W. Horn.

Society adjourned to meet in two weeks at the residence of T. R. Bowen.

December 5, 1883

The M. E. Church Lyceum met at G. W. Pershing's house on last Friday night and enjoyed the usual literary feast of readings, rehearsals, singing and a society paper full of wit, wisdom and good humor.

This society meets at private residences once in two weeks and is attended by about 30 of the young people of the church and congregation.

I. D. Lawler is president and Mida Pershing is secretary. A pleasant and profitable place for young people to spend the long, winter evenings.

(Mr. Lawler is one of the men who was drowned on the tug Leo in 1889.)

# Circuit Riders

■ HISTORICALLY, THIS STORY concerning Circuit Riders should precede that of any other subject in our collection. It is a large order and your historian could in no way do justice to it, short of months of reading and research. Having heard Prof. Paul H. Boase, associate professor of speech at Oberlin College, give a lecture concerning Methodist Circuit Riders in Northern Ohio for the Lorain County Historical Society, I interviewed him on this subject. I had hoped merely to learn who the riders of our particular area might have been and, if possible, read some of their comments on the work here in Black River.

Prof. Boase demonstrated that he was happy to discuss one of his favorite subjects and so willingly supplied me with a great quantity of reading matter. Of course I have found that a short article would be wholly inadequate to show the background, the mechanics of the system, the fervent spirit of the riders and an appraisal of their work. I can only hope that the short items included in this report will stir your curiosity and interest enough, that you will want to do some research of your own. I recommend to you Prof. Boase's thesis, "The Methodist Circuit Rider on the Ohio Frontier," "submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Wisconsin in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy" in 1952.

In the material lent to me was the Chronological Account of the "Saddle-Bag Tribe" from 1823 to 1858 as it was traced in (now) Lorain Co. Sure enough, Uri Richards and Moses K. Hard are there.

Another item of interest was the account of the manuscripts of Philip Gatch, born in Baltimore, Maryland, who was the first circuit rider in Ohio. These manuscripts are in the possession of Miss Virginia Markham, (daughter of Grant Markham) and grand-daughter of Rev. L. A. Markham one of our early pastors. Miss Markham has been a teacher in the Cleveland Public Schools and still resides in the city. Mr. Gatch was an ancestor of Mrs. Grant Markham.

Prof. Boase also lists Rev. J. H. Pitzel's manuscript as part of the Bibliography used in writing his thesis. Rev. Pitzel is in our history as having lived some of his retirement years in Lorain.

Rev. Alfred Brunson (originally Brownson) mentions in his book "Western Pioneer" that, clad in homespun, he made his way to his new circuit in Huron Co. through almost impassable wilderness, to find his charge. He writes of crossing Black River on Ridge Road (?) and finding a family named Smith who counted themselves Methodists. His is a story to make you wonder at the faith and determination of these riders. His circuit extended west from the river, through Pittsfield, Norwalk and he had to travel 30 miles before he found a road leading to the lake shore, west of Cleveland.

Elnathan Corrington Gavitt's book, "Crumbs from my Saddle Bags", Chapter 20, brings us a little nearer to our own settlement here. He writes "In 1830 I was assigned to the Black River Circuit in company with Cyrus S. Carpenter, an excellent Christian

brother of ordinary ministerial ability. He was favored with a superior educated companion and a very kind and sweet dispositioned lady. She was a valuable accession to the charge, and contributed largely to the usefulness of her husband."

The presiding elders of the church discouraged marriage for their saddle bag preachers. Some of the people on the circuit were also against it, because their donations must of necessity be larger to support the rider's family which often rode along with him. Amount of salary for a married preacher was \$200 a year, for an unmarried one, \$100. Could a parallel be found today in the people who wanted a free gospel from every angle?

There was a problem too, in where to house these people. You take them this trip. I have company coming and my "young-uns" are half sick.

At a Quarterly Meeting Conference held at Grafton, Lorain County, December 26, 1829 a committee was appointed to select a suitable site for a house to be erected for the use of the itinerant pastor and his family. Elyria was chosen and a group of 57 men signed to provide money, labor, material or grain to further the building of the house. The labor to be performed and the material to be delivered within six months. The grain to be paid within one year and the money within one year in quarterly payments. Among those names I find only one, James Porter, who might have been from the village of Black River. Rev. Gavitt shows his spirit of aggressiveness in this story concerning Oberlin. He wished to establish a Methodist class or church in the village but had difficulty persuading the college authorities that there was room for another denomination than the one already established, Congregational. He had word, "If Mr. Gavitt thinks he can preach any better than the faculty, then he can come." Mr. Gavitt went, and on presenting himself to the one church organization there, was asked, "Do you think you can?" (Preach better.) He replied, "If I did not I should not be here . . .". Mr. Finney of the college wanted "to keep the place free from any conflicting influences."

Mr. Gavitt added "Well, my good brother, that may be alright and the best thing for your church and the institution, but it was somewhat unfortunate that the Lord had not been informed of that fact in time. Then He would have said, 'Go ye into all the world and preach My Gospel to every creature—except in Oberlin.' There they want the exclusive right of church membership, and no Methodist interference whatever."

Mr. Gavitt did start a class of twenty members.

The name of Capt. Stanton Sholes is mentioned as having built, principally out of his own means, the first frame Methodist Church in North Amherst in 1832. The village of Black River became a part of the North Amherst circuit.

Rev. Gavitt mentions Abraham Rice of Amherst, a good Methodist brother. Also Mr. Martin Belden, who could be one of our Mrs. Nellie Kurtz' long ago relatives. Their story of a trip to the Mormon settlement in Nauvoo, Illinois in 1842 where they found

some Methodist back-sliders from Amherst, is entertaining.

"The Black River Circuit was an extensive charge bounded on the north by Lake Erie, on the east by the Cuyahoga on the south by Wayne County and on the west by the Fire Lands. There was but one Methodist meeting house within the bounds of this charge. That one was in Wellington." The above, a continuation of Rev. Gavitt's account in 1830. Rev. Gavitt also says that the entire church, mentioned above, "was finished and completed from top to bottom, with something less than a pound of nails, which I purchased in Cleveland, and were used in finishing door and pulpit, and a small table for communion purposes."

It has been disappointing not to have found actual accounts of happenings in the village of Black River or Charleston, when such small settlements as Avon, Dover (Westlake) and LaPorte are given space in the Methodist Circuit Riders writings. That

might be because "Father Betts", the Presbyterian circuit preacher of Huron and Brownhelm, had things pretty well in hand. If you recall, it was he who had some influence in getting Rev. Moses K. Hard and his helper, Rev. Griffin, Methodists, to come and try their methods on the people in Charleston. No "Oberlin incident" in that, I'd say.

A rare book company of Mansfield at one time—not too long ago—advertised "Wrapper Titles—Confession of Faith, Historical and Statistical sketches of the churches under the Presbytery of Huron" (Norwalk 1854).

It has not been my privilege, as yet, to examine Father Betts accounts of his work which could be in the above-mentioned papers. It might be that he could give some more light on the religious atmosphere of our village in his day, and why he thought the Methodists could live things up.

The research will continue.

## The Official Board

■ FROM THAT FIRST Board of Trustees in 1856, Caleb Peachy, treasurer, John Nichols, Capt. Henry Wallace, et. al., down through one hundred years to our present Official Board, there has been much, much, business transacted, some odd things done in the early days, because of lack of know-how, some trustees who were not members of the church, elected because they had business experience, some touchy subjects handled and many gray hairs given a head start.

It is recorded that those first trustees had to supervise the improvements needed to make that first wooden building ready for use. Was this necessary, was that necessary, can't we let the painting wait, do we need a bell, what about the hitching posts, who will keep the fire going to hurry the drying of the plaster?

Caleb Peachy lived about opposite the church and he was delegated to look after that fire. He must have spent some miserable evenings thinking of the number of times he would have to trip(?) across the street and put on some more coal or wood and not too much, for fear of disastrous results. No time-and-a-half pay for over-hours trustee work. Mr. Peachy's granddaughter, Marjorie Bourne, of the Cleveland Library staff, told Mrs. Elnora Horn Fauver that Grandpa Caleb caught his death of cold doing his churchly duties in the way of keeping the fire going, and died from pneumonia. Grandma Peachy is recorded as saying she left the Methodist church when many of the members decided to organize a Congregational church. When asked how it was that the Methodists could afford the extensive repairs they made on that old wooden building, Mrs. Peachy said that the ladies of the church went around the village and took up subscriptions from anyone and everyone, because for a while there was just that one church to support.

The "Discipline" (1944 copy), of the Methodist Church, states: "In every church and charge there shall be an executive body, the Official Board or the

Board of Stewards as the Quarterly Conference may determine. . . ." That body is made up of Stewards, Trustees, Pastor, Layleader, Superintendent of Church School, Chairman Board of Education and Director, Annual Conference Laymember, President W.S.C.S., President Methodist Men, Church Treasurer, Associate Pastor, Youth Division Representative. All must be members of the church.

The Discipline also outlines details of the work, all under direction of pastor. The details are legion. We should be willing to read about the work expected of the Board and then praise those who take the responsibility of general oversight of the business of the church. It is probably easier to criticize or ignore what is done.

Would you like to make up the Budget of the church? Fix the pastor's salary? Take care of the every member canvass and come home with a wounded spirit? Reading a sample of the minutes of just one Official Board meeting would likely make the head of any non-working church member, spin 'round. What do you imagine happens to the Board members?

I wish I could bring to your attention the names of all the fine people who have given their thought and time to the official business of the church.

Some time when a meeting of the Quarterly Conference is announced, plan to attend and hear first hand the reports of every organization of the church. When you have heard the disbursing treasurer, the benevolence treasurer, the Methodist Ministers' Pension chairman, the redecorating committee and dozens of others, you will realize how many hours of work go into all the work of the church. The Board must pass judgment on all these things. Do the members of the Board all agree? They are all human, so you can answer that question yourself. When the District Superintendent (we used to call him the Presiding Elder) comes to hear and advise, he finds much that is praise-worthy in our fine leadership. A bit of practical Christianity at work.



# John J. Nichols

September, 1956

■ I HAVE BEEN asked to write something of the relations of my parents with the early Methodist Church in Lorain.

My parents were John J. and Debora W. Nichols.

My father died when I was five years old (1878) so I do not remember personally, much of his religious life. My mother lived twenty one years after my father's death. I learned from her and father's many friends a good deal of his life and Christian service.

My mother, Debora Lowe, was born in a log cabin in Berlin Township, Erie County, Ohio, in 1836. She was the youngest of a good sized family. Her father died before she was born. From her earliest youth she knew hard work, economy, sacrifice and God.

In young womanhood this girl married a farmer who lived in Black River Township, Lorain County, Ohio. Their home was on the lake shore about two and one half miles west of "Black River" one of the former names of Lorain. The name of the young man whom this girl married was John J. Nichols.

Nichols was an honest, hard working man. He did not surrendered to Jesus Christ. One evening, my mother, Debora, as was her custom, talked with her Savior. Part of that talk was about her husband. John (my father), heard that prayer. The next evening he knelt at the altar of the church and surrendered to God.

From that time my father worked the farm for the necessities of life. His principal work was connected with Christ's Kingdom. No mud was ever too deep or snow banks too high to keep him from his church and prayer meeting. If mud or snow or rough frozen roads were too bad to take a horse out, he walked. It has been said that he walked two and one half miles to the church, built the fire and rang the bell to call folks from their homes next to the church, to prayer meeting. His life interest seemed to be in the church and Sunday School and in the homes and individuals who were so in earnest in the work.

My father taught in the Sunday School and was at times Sunday School superintendent. One day in the 1930's Mrs. McAllister who had been a member of a class taught by my father, gave to my daughter, Edith (my father's granddaughter), a vase which my father had given her for faithful Sunday School attendance.

My father spent much time with his Bible. He bought, and we still have in our home, four leather bound volumes of Clark's Commentaries on the Bible, the book Josephus and other helps in Bible study.

Mr. T. R. Bowen once told me that he had tried to take my father's place in the church, greeting folks and making them feel at home in the church.

My mother was not so regular in attendance during these years. There was a good sized family of growing children at home. A good deal of the time a babe in her arms. There never was a time when mother was not doing her full duty. She was always intimately acquainted with Christ. One evening in the old Washington Ave. Church, Prayer meeting night, the door opened, the minister looked up and said, "Here comes sister Nichols and her boys."

One day in 1899 I stood with other members of our family at mother's bedside. With the last breath she ever drew she said distinctly, "The Open Door — The Open Door."

My sister Grace, whom many of you remember, was faithful in her church work. She taught girls in the Sunday School for many years and was connected with many other useful offices in the church.

Probably more than thirty years after my father's death three people for whom I was permitted to perform a service, spoke to me of my father. None of these had belonged to father's church. One had done the annual grain threshing. One had worked in father's brick yard. One had known father more by reputation than by close acquaintance. Two said, "After breakfast, before we went to work, we went into the living room where your father read the Bible and we had prayer." The third one said, "I always heard so much of your father's prayer life."

I am including in this report a copy of a paper which my father wrote and signed in 1886.

I shall never stop thanking God for his love as expressed in the parents He gave me.

Yours in Christ,

John Birdsall Nichols

Bert Nichols

A granddaughter of Mr. John J. Nichols, Mrs. Virginia Nichols Buckley, and her daughter, Marilyn Buckley, also represent (now 1956) the Nichols family in First Church.

## Black River

February 21, 1886

■ ETERNAL AND UNCHANGEABLE God thou great Creator of heaven and Earth and Lord of angels and men I desire with the deepest humiliation and abasement of self to fall down in thy awful presence deeply penetrated with a self sense of thy glorious perfections trembling may well take hold upon me when I a sinful worm presume to Lift up my soul to thee on

such an occasion as this. Who am I O lord God or what is my nature and descent my Character and desert that I should speak of this, and be one party in the Covenant where thou the king of kings and Lord of Lords arte the other but O Lord great as is thy majesty so also is thy mercy and I know that in and through Jesus Christ the son of thy love, thou Condescendest to visit sinful mortals and to allow their

approach to thee and their Engaging in Covenant with thee may i know that thou hast instituted the Covenant relation between thee and me, and that thou hast graciously sent to propose it to me i am unworthy of thy smallest favors, and having sinned against thee I have forfeited all right of stipulation in my own name and thankfully accept the conditions which thy infinite wisdom and godness have appointed as just and right and altogether gracious and this day do I, with the utmost solemnity and sincerity, surrender myself to thee, desiring nothing so much as to be wholly thine. I renounce all former lords that have had dominion over me, and I Consecrate to thee all that I am, and all that i have, the faculties of my minde the members of my body, my worldly possessions, my time and my influence with others to be all used entirely fore thy glory and, resolutely employed in obedience to thy commands, as long as thou shalt continue my life ever holding myself in an attentive posture to observe the first intimation of thy will, and ready with alacrity and zeal to execute it whether it relates to thee to myself or my fellow creatures, to thy direction also I resign my self, and all I am and have, to be disposed of by thee in such a manner as thou shalt in infinite wisdom judge most fore thy glory, to thee i leave the management of all events, and say without reserve thy will be done.

and I herby resolve to take thee fore my supreme Lorde and all sufficient portion: that i will acknowledge no god but thee, the father, the son, an the holy ghost; that i will depend alone on the meditation of thy dearly beloved son for wisdom righteousness and redemption, and may people, wash

me in the blood of thy dear son and sanctify me throughout by the power of thy spirit, that i may love thee with all my heart and serve thee with a willing mind, Communicate to me, I beseech thee, all needed influence of thy purifying, thy cheering, and thy comforting spirits and lift up that light of thy Countenance upon which shall putjoy and gladness into my soul and when i shall have done and borne thy will upon Earth, Call me from hence at what time and in what manner thou pleasest: only grant that in my dying moments, and in the near prospect of eternity I may remember these my engagements to thee, and may employ my latest breath in thy service and do thou, Lord when thou seest agonies of dissolving nature upon me, remember this Covenant, too, even though I should be incapable of recollecting it. Look down, O heavenly father, with a pitying eye upon thy languishing, thy dying child, place thy everlasting arms under me for my support: put strength and confidence into my departing spirit, and receive it to the embraces of thy everlasting Love welcome it to the abodes of them that s(l)eep in Jesus, to wait with them that glorious day, when the last of thy promises, to thy covenant people shall be fulfilled in their resurrection and to that abundant entrance which shall be ministered to them into that everlasting kingdom of which thou hast assured them by thy Covenant, and in the hope which I now lay hold on it, designing to live and die as with my hand upon it, amen amen

John Nichols

(Note: this is copied from a meditation and prayer written in Mr. Nichols hand writing.)

## Custodians

■ THESE WERE THE men who really knew the short-comings of the church members. We made many demands on them and "Will you please?" must have been a peculiar sound to their ears. They had to clean up after the careless ones had left this and that around, they had to be at church early and late to keep us comfortable and warm and clean, and if we had an evening affair, wait around until everybody had left the church.

The dignity of their labor was often lost on us.

Church temperature too hot, church temperature too cold, drafts, dust in the corners, moths in the carpet smoke from the registers, snow not shoveled, shrubbery un-trimmed, doors left un-locked. Poor janitor had to have a thick skin to take all the blame.

In the line of progression, a house committee was appointed and many men and women have helped take over the responsibility of good housekeeping for the church. Many interviews and consultations were held to find the right man of good habits and plenty of energy. However, we still sing "The Church Kitchen Blues" and the caretaker is the friend we

need in adjusting this and that. To be sure the present day custodians do have the privilege of eating good dinners when the women are preparing a banquet, but we would not begrudge that slight increase in pay.

From boy to janitor to caretaker to custodian. The title changed as our financial status grew, I guess. Today there are more conveniences for the man of all work to use but the job still goes begging at times.

When the parsonage was next door to the church, the minister's sons, if he had some, were persuaded to look after the cleanliness and comfortableness of the church building. If the Markham boys, Grant and William or the Stroup boys, Philip and John, were here they could probably testify that cleanliness and godliness were not always following each other around.

Do we stop to get acquainted with the man who would gladly give up a dollar of his salary for a dime's worth of our consideration or a pat on the back?

# The Reeve Sisters

■ A DEFINITE CHILDREN'S worship center was the desire of two of our faithful church members, Misses Edna and Sarah Reeve. They were both teachers in Primary grades in our public schools and were noted for their excellency in teaching, not just routine work, but a way of living. They began their public school service soon after their graduation from high school. Miss Edna graduating in 1896 and Sarah in 1900. They labored long and effectively with the new foreign groups in this city.

They loved their work in day school and in Sunday School and the children who came under their care in Sunday School were given lasting impressions of the meaning of the altar and the cross. After setting up the children's worship center in the new church they worked together eleven years, 1928 - 1939. Miss Sarah's record of Sunday School teaching totals 48 years.

Miss Edna died in 1939. Miss Sarah is now (1956) on the retired list at Shield's Rest Home, Oberlin Ave., Lorain. We owe them many thanks.

Mrs. Caroline Ulrich Proctor, Mrs. Martha Coates and Mrs. Nellie Albaugh have carried on the work begun by the Reeve sisters, using the same altar and cross that they used. Mrs. Proctor has been of service in many positions in the church. She served so well in the choir.

Mrs. Coates sets a wonderful example in her quiet, efficient way. Beside being faithful to Sunday School work she has served as treasurer of the Women's Society for quite some time. Mrs. Albaugh is taking her leisure now after many years of service in Grace Church and First Church.

Mrs. Earl Morse is superintendent of Children's work and is tireless in her efforts to promote a definite attitude of worship among the children. Even through severe physical difficulties she has carried on.

When the children become old enough to attend and enjoy the regular church service, they will be able to appreciate and take part in our churchly procedures, even to the hymns.

## How I Became a Deaconess

By EVELYN WEAVER

■ IN 1940 I felt a great need and urge to associate myself with the fellowship of the church. There were a few in particular who gave me that "belonging" feeling. The post graduate youth fellowship, quite small at the time singled me out for one of its department leaders. This gave me a sense of feeling my importance within the church.

Certain folks of the church challenged me to greater fields and greater thinking. They knew I enjoyed sports of all kinds, better perhaps, than anything else. La Donna Bogardus, deaconess of this church at that time, informed me that her alma mater, the National College for Christian Service in Kansas City, Missouri, would train me in recreational work with a more Christian emphasis.

At the college which I attended four years and received my diploma, I received not a career but a life, the life of living as a Christian which is the life of love, fellowship and service.

The year, 1945, was a great year for me—I was graduated from the college and was then commissioned deaconess in New York City. Before being commissioned, I filled out some 20 pages of appli-

cation blanks and appeared before a jurisdictional and a general board for approval.

On the night of commissioning service, in which some 25 foreign and home missionaries were also commissioned, I received my appointment. I was sent to Harwood Girl's School in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Harwood school is a mission school under the Women's Society and is truly a mission field. It is a school, a boarding school, for children and youth who want more of a Christian emphasis to their education or who do not have the opportunity to attend any school. It is a standard school in its physical education.

In 1946-7, I attended the College of the Pacific in Stockton, California. There, I was conferred my Bachelor of Arts Degree. Now, I am returning to Harwood Girl's School to teach U. S. History, Civics and coordinate the physical education program.

My year, 1947-8, should be very challenging. I am looking forward with great delight in planting the seed of Christian love and service in a world of hate, jealousy and racial suicide.

# Praying Christians

Written in 1878 by Mrs. H. D. Root

■ AT A PUBLIC MEETING long since, we heard it remarked that ten years ago (1868) there was not a Christian in town to pray with a dying man and we thought the person that made the remark had been misinformed, or did not know the past of the town.

If we remember 41 or 42 years ago there was a Baptist church organized here and there were persons in the church that claimed to be Christians and could pray.

Thirty or more years ago, the Presbyterians organized a church and for a few years had a pastor, Father Betts.

After his death the Methodists formed a society 22 years ago this Winter (1856). They repaired the old church and occupied it until the new brick was built, some seven years ago, (1870-71).

Twenty-two years ago Rev. Hard and Griffin held a meeting of some length at which 99 persons were converted and added to the society and many of those were grand examples of the saving power of Christ.

Of this number were the venerable Father Gillmore and wife whom all knew and loved, who have passed over the river of death. Mrs. W. A. Jones, Sr., also Mrs. Cobb, Mrs. Silverthorne, Mrs. A. Bridge, Mrs. Adams and Mr. and Mrs. R. Osgood, who joined the society by letter.

It was at this meeting that Father Standen and wife were converted and he will tell you that he has been a praying man ever since, only too happy to be permitted to pray with the sick or dying.

Fourteen years ago, 1864, Rev. Z. A. Hughes held a meeting in the old church at which there were 40 more added and a goodly number remain today. In all these years of ups and downs, there never was a time when there was not earnest, praying people in Lorain.

Sister Jones lived a noble, praying life, ready always to visit and pray with the sick and dying and there were others who were known to be living, praying Christians, even when there was only one Protestant church in the place.

Mrs. Root's daughter, Mrs. Walter Goodell, added the following on April 6, 1924 —

I would like to give you a pen picture of a few of the people in the church in the late 70's that some

here can remember when we were children.

Father Standen, spoken of in the above article, stands out in our memory as a character never to be forgotten, was hard of hearing. He always sat on the platform in a big easy chair beside the pulpit so he could hear the sermons, leaning on his hands on his cane and what he lacked in hearing, he made up in seeing everything that went on, as Mr. Bowen can tell you when he told him to put his dog outdoors and we children got a hard look sometimes when we didn't behave, but for all that he was a good praying man.

J. J. Nichols and his good wife living out on the West shore where the Country Club is today were living examples of praying Christians. The good wife was kept at home a good deal but Mr. Nichols was always at his post in all kinds of weather and his children always went to church as three of them can tell you if they are here today.

T. R. King was another in those old days. We children thought his prayers oft-times were too long. They always began — "this blessed even", as it were, — didn't make any difference what time of day it was.

Another, Mrs. T. A. Burton, always a timid retiring person and when she made a prayer, it was very short but it was said of her the few words she did say went closer to the throne of God than lots of flowery, long drawn out prayers.

Mr. and Mrs. Vorwerk were also in those early days of church life.

Mrs. G. B. Carney who always made our Easter bonnets in her millinery store.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Jones — faithful.

Also —

Mr. and Mrs. Ebenezer Gregg, Mr. and Mrs. Gorie Baldwin, Mrs. Thomas Gawn, Capt. Alexander McPhail, Capt. and Mrs. R. J. Cowley, Capt. and Mrs. Thos. Wilford, Mr. and Mrs. T. R. Bowen, Mrs. Lydia Jones.

Mr. Bowen came to Lorain in 1874, was one of the leading lights, always working, praying, giving. He gave his untiring devotion to the project of building the new church (1892).



# The Historical Committee

■ 1839: The first organized body of Christian Worshipers in the village of Charleston, now Lorain, decided their church to be Presbyterian on May 8, 1839.

1856: The first Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in Lorain. The Presbyterian Church at this time united with the more numerous Methodists in the organization of a Methodist Church.

1872: The erection of a new Methodist Episcopal Church on northwest corner of Washington and West Eries Ave., across from what is now Hotel Antlers. The membership now is 99.

1875: The Lorain Methodist Episcopal Church becomes a station. Previous to this Lorain was a part of the North Amherst Circuit. Rev. A. P. Jones was the first pastor of the Lorain station.

1890: Membership has grown to 280 in the church, and 274 in the Bible School.

1892: The erection of a splendid new brick church on the corner of Reid Ave. and Sixth St. Rev. J. Frank Smith, pastor; H. C. Lindsey, Zanesville, O., architect, and Fred W. Pierce, Lorain, contractor.

1893: Dedication of the new church on Jan. 8, by Bishop Isaac W. Joyce. The trustees in charge were as follows: T. R. Bowen, Mark Jones, Thomas G. Chapman, W. B. Thompson, M. H. Lampman, Dr. A. N. Garver, George Wickens and Dr. C. W. Purcell.

1906: March 30, the present parsonage property was purchased from Frank Floding.

1923: Sept. 18, Rev. C. B. Hess, D. D., the present pastor, was appointed to First Church.

1924: June 28, the church was destroyed by a tornado, the parsonage was seriously damaged, and a large section of our city was laid waste with injury and great loss to 75 percent or more of our membership.

1924: Dec. 15-22 Financial campaign in which \$115,000 was pledged for the new church.

Sept. 21, 1925: Reclaimed cornerstone from the destroyed church laid the second time, resting in the northwest corner as lasting memorial to our pioneer Methodists.

Oct. 11, 1925: The cornerstone of the new church placed in the southwest corner by Bishop Theodore S. Henderson.

Dec. 5, 1926: Dedication of the new church by Bishop Theodore S. Henderson.

Sept. 18-24, 1926: Northeast Ohio Annual Conference.

Dec. 4, 1927: Pastorate of Rev. Elmer S. Smith, Ph.D., established the tradition of our annual Joash Chest for financial offerings.

May 10, 1939: The Methodist Church is the ecclesiastical and lawful successor of the three uniting churches, namely, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and the

Methodist Protestant Church. This reorganization effected every local church. The pastorate of Rev. Alva I. Cox brought this reorganization to First Church.

April 17, 1941: Purchase of parsonage, 1134 6th St., cost \$8,500. Sale of old parsonage, \$4,100.

Feb. 3, 1946: Dedication of Dodge Memorial Chapel by Bishop Raymond J. Wade. Rev. Charles F. Jones, minister. Gift of \$2,000 from Mrs. C. P. Dodge.

Dec. 21, 1947: Dedication of Deagan Cathedral Chimes and their amplification. Donation of \$3,000 by Mrs. C. P. Dodge.

Sept. 19, 1948: Burning of church mortgage. Rev. Charles F. Jones, minister.

Nov. 4-11, 1956: Centennial Celebration.

■ AT THE 4TH Quarterly Conference, May 6, 1946, the following members were appointed as an Historical Committee—

Mr. Frank Proctor, Chairman

Mrs. Mary Whitehouse

Mrs. Ralph Hurst

Mr. Ralph Hurst, appointed later

Miss Maude Johnson, Church Sec'y.

Miss Anna Vorwerk

Rev. Charles F. Jones

There had been historical material collected previous to this. Some of it was lost at the time of the tornado.

The above committee started with what was available and collected much material of interest. Some of them went back in memory many years to recall the old way of doing things.

Mr. Proctor spent many hours going through piles of old newspapers at the Lorain Journal and Times Herald office and then arranged and wrote many articles. His sudden death, and the failing health of some of the older members of the committee put an end to historical business for a while. Dr. Green turned the collected material over to Mrs. Edna Whitehouse Ayres, one born into the church, as it were, and the research and writing was on its way again. Miss Catherine Gregg, a great, great, granddaughter of the church, was asked to assist in the writing and worked willingly and vigorously on her assignment.

Catherine and Edna have been dubbed the "nosey gals" many times but have gone on interviewing, digging, piecing things together and have come up with words, words, words, hoping to create in your mind a picture of the ways things were done during our century of church growth and progress. If you are not completely satisfied with what you read, remember that is exactly our position also. If there is such a thing as a labor of love, this is it.

During her research, Mrs. Ayres discovered the

ancient record of a law suit tried in the Lorain County common pleas court in 1885 in which leaders of the community gave their testimony and recollection as to early life in Lorain and the origin and beginning of the First Methodist Church in 1856.

Recollections of the witnesses went back into the era when Black River, as Lorain was then known, was but a fishing village on the edge of a swamp with building of wooden ships cut from the adjoining forests as its only industry.

A record of the testimony was preserved in the court archives and was recently discovered stored away in the attic of the Lorain County Jail building in Elyria.

The stenographic record was transcribed in long hand and occupied more than 80 pages in the records of the court. It presents a new and fresh account of life in Lorain 100 years ago.

Would you like to take over the next hundred years?  
E. A.

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Ay

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Ayres, E. W.	
AUTHOR	
History of the First	
TITLE	
Methodist Church, 1856-1956	
Borrower's Name	

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
559 RED AVENUE  
LORAIN, OHIO 44052

